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THE HERETIC.

THE HERETIC;

OR,

THE GERMAN STRANGER.

An Historical Romance

OF

THE COURT OF RUSSIA

IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN OF LAJETCHNIKOFF.

BY

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IN THE IMPERIAL LYCEUM OF TSÁRSKOË SELÓ.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL II.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS,
EDINBURGH AND LONDON.
1845.

BIBLIOTHECA
REGIA
MONACENSIS.

THE HERETIC.

CHAPTER I.

THE PATIENTS.

" And what if I thy bold-faced saucy cheat
Before the time to all the world discover?" . . . .

PÓUSHKIN.

From this moment Andrióusha was a frequent visitor to Ehrenstein: he taught him Russian; and the intelligent pupil, with the aid of the Tchekh language, made rapid progress. It was delightful to see how the boy dressed himself in magisterial importance during the lessons; and how obediently the Paduan bachelor listened. Sometimes the master would knit his brows when the pupil's obstinate tongue—accustomed to the easy sounds of the Italian—refused to utter the sometimes difficult combi-

nations of Russian consonants. The lesson ended, the professor and disciple were gone, and in their place appeared friendship with her smiles, her lively conversation, and caresses. Friendship! when one of them was more than twenty-five, and the other not above half that age! . . . . what matter? Both were young in soul—both felt aspirations after all that was noble, and a mysterious attraction for each other. They seemed to have riveted some indescribable chain which fate alone could undo. They called each other friend, and could not understand how strangers could find any thing extraordinary in their connexion. Antony was almost alone in a foreign land: the artist, in consequence of the multitude of his various occupations, could but seldom visit him. The master of the house, and almost all the Russians, continued to estrange themselves, or rather to shun him with abhorrence; Andrea was the only being in Russia that loved him, that understood him, that communicated with him the thoughts of an intellect early developed, and a warm and benevolent soul. To Andrióusha no less did the young physician become something indispensable—a fifth element, as it were: without him the world would have been a blank. Born in Italy, he still remem-

bered, like some spirit exiled to this dull earth from another and brighter world—he remembered with lively regret the luxuriance of southern nature, the skies of those lands—their groves of orange and cypress; and it seemed as if there breathed on him from Antony the warm odorous air of that blessed region. Something strange and mysterious, too, attracted him to the young German . . . . what it was, he could never describe, even to himself. The boy warmly loved one other being, good and beautiful too—but this being he loved less than Antony. This was Obrazétz's daughter, Anastasia. Frequently did he go from Ehrenstein to her, and from her to his friend; and this intercourse, which began in innocence, established between them a kind of magic, threefold bond.

Ehrenstein had never seen Anastasia; but had often listened to the steps of her little feet upon the ceiling of his chamber. Often Andrióusha would relate how beautiful she was, how good, how kind, how she loved him, how she kissed him. This close proximity to a young maiden, to whom the descriptions of his friend, as well as his own imagination, gave all that was nearest perfection, external as well as intellectual; the mystery that surrounded her;

her close retirement; the difficulty of beholding her —all this awoke in Antony's heart a feeling to which he had hitherto been a stranger. He frequently thought upon her, listened to any story about her with peculiar delight, kissed Andrióusha more frequently, when the latter mentioned that Anastasia had kissed him—and often beheld in his dreams a lovely female form, which he called by her name. In one word, he was in love with her, though he had never seen her. But soon he called this feeling folly—the caprice of solitude; and he extinguished it by renewed application to his science, to which he devoted himself with fresh warmth and sedulity. If he mentioned any thing about Anastasia now, it was only as a jest; even the sound of her step over-head he now learned to hear with indifference, as we listen to the unvarying beat of the pendulum of a clock. The visitors who soon besieged him on all sides, aided him to cast away every thought about her; and at last Muscovite patients presented themselves to him. They had, then, thrown aside their hatred of the foreigner, and their dread of the sorcerer, as he had been hitherto accounted. At last, to work, Antony! Thy heart bounds with the sweet hope of helping suffering humanity; let them besiege thee

night and day—let them give thee no rest! These toils, these importunities will be delightful to thee. Thou wouldst not exchange them for all the lazy luxury of wealth.

"Who is there?"

"I, your most obsequious servant, his highness's interpreter, Bartholoméw; and I come not alone. With me there is an obsequious patient, if you will permit him to be so, right worshipful Master Leech."

"I pray ye, enter."

And — dot-and-go-one, dot-and-go-one! — there glided into the chamber the splendidly illuminated face of the printer, the terrible vanquisher of all women from the Rhine to the Yaóuza. Clinging to him by his clawlike fingers, there crawled in, as if for contrast, an animated skeleton, covered with a wrinkled hide; its head and chin were fringed with a few remnants of white hair, and it was swathed in a shóuba. He seemed to breathe out, as it were, an odour of corruption. This being, which had once been man, might have dwelt on earth perhaps eighty years; by his eyes, his lips, his voice, by each convulsive jerk that replaced movement, death seemed to be saying—"Forget not that I am here; I sit

firm—my respite is but short." But the man—for man he once had been—had forgotten this, and was come to ask Antony the leech, the Almayne sorcerer, who could restore youth and strength to the aged, by transfusing into their veins the blood of children —he came to ask him for life, life but for ten or twenty years. He had a young wife, he was rich, he *must* live on awhile. Antony himself was an aged man: they had beheld him by night, through the window, old—by day, he transformed himself into a handsome blooming youth. Who was there, in all Moscow, that knew not this? . . . .

The living skeleton looked wistfully, yet with fear, at the leech, and still more beseechingly he pointed to a boy of ten years' old, who was standing, in a kind of awe, by the door. Nothing, it seemed, could be better chosen; just the age, just the appearance, that the German had described to the Great Prince as proper for the great operation of restoring youth.

Antony himself was petrified. "No," he thought, "never will I consent to this frightful experiment! And even if it should succeed . . . . at the expense of this child's young, blooming life, to prolong for a year or two the mere animal existence of a dotard!

who perhaps is a burden to the earth . . . . Never, never ! "

" Fear not, most high worshipful sir !" said Bartholomew with a simper, " that, in case of the death of this boy, either you or this respectable gentleman will have to answer for it. Fear not, fear not, this lad is—a *kholóp*."

" I understand not the meaning of '*kholóp*,'" replied Antony; " I only know that he is a human being."

" Human ! . . . . hm ! . . . . a human being . . . . I have the honour to inform you he is a kholóp—a slave. Be assured, I am myself exceeding cautelous in these matters; and therefore have I looked into the soudébnik of the Great Prince of All Russia. There, the law is clearly laid down: 'Bot whosoeuer, beeing a lord, schal peradventure sinne, and bete hys kholóp, or his bondwoman, so thatte y^e^ sam dye therof; thanne yn no cas schal y^e^ lorde bee judged or accownted guilty therof.' When translated, this means . . . . (here the eager interpreter turned the text into German.) In case of the death of this lad, we shall say that his master *sinned*; and 'tis finished. This we have settled with the right worshipful baron—the richest, and, I

must add, the most generous of mortals. This agreement is sealed with a solemn oath."

During this lively conversation, which the living skeleton understood by the citation of the text, he called the boy to him, convulsively patted him on the head with a fatherly tenderness, paddling with his bony fingers on the downy cheek, then leered at the physician, as though he would say—"Look, 'tis like a ripe cherry!"

"Harkye, Bartholomew!" said the young physician sternly—"Once for all I tell thee, if ever thou darest again to come to me with such propositions, I will throw thee out of the window."

The eager and submissive interpreter of all work by no means expected such a reply. He was altogether disconcerted, and in a pitiful mumbling tone he continued, laying on every word, and almost every syllable, a comma emphasis, like that made by his leg—"You . . . . yourself . . . . most high wor . . . . shipful . . . . said . . . . to the Great Prince" . . . .

"True, true! I was in the wrong. But, to console this decrepit old man of thine, I will give him the elixir of life—not long invented. Tell him, that 'tis a pity he could not have made use of it some

twenty years sooner: then he would have lived twenty years longer. But even as it is, if he will take ten drops of it morning and evening .... I hope it will strengthen the old man .... keep him up, if but for a time" ....

A phial of the elixir was given to the walking skeleton, with a translation of the physician's directions. The dotard's trembling, bony hand laid on the table a schiffsnobel. A schiffsnobel! Whatever you may think, the fee was a princely one, judging from the fact, that even Iván Vassílievitch himself was wont to send to the kinsmen of his friends, to Tsarinas, to their children, a schiffsnobel at a time —it was very rare indeed if he gave two. Notwithstanding the splendour of the fee, the physician returned the money, saying that he would accept it when the medicine began to act. With this, he conducted the patient and his go-between to the door.

The elixir, it seemed, did not operate so powerfully as the decrepit old man had hoped. He laid all the blame on the boy, his kholóp, whom, as Bartholomew had said, the physician had desired to save; and he *did* "sin"—by dashing out the boy's brains. But "in thys cas, y^{e} judges didde" not "account

hym guilty—nor judge hym," because the laws were not written by slaves. The slave was buried, and nothing more was said about it. Within a week, however, a higher Judge had summoned the lord also before his judgment-seat.

On the next day, late in the evening, came another tap at the door.

"Who is there?"

"'Tis I, if I may venture to say so; your most devoted servant, the printer Bartholoméus."

"Come in."

"I am not alone, I have . . . . with me" . . . .

"Remember our agreement, Master Bartholoméw."

"How can I forget it! . . . sooner may my right hand wither away! . . . . I have with me . . . . a young lady . . . not a dry, decrepit, old dotard, on whom it would be too much honour even to spit . . . No, a young, beautiful lady, whose fingers you would never be tired of kissing . . . . the rich widow, Selínova; she is waiting on the stairs; may she enter?"

"If she pleases."

"I suppose she cometh to consult me about a son, a relation—who knoweth?" thought Antony, as he hastily donned a richer mantle.

In reality, there timidly entered the room a pretty woman, of about the same age as Ehrenstein; she seemed quaking in every limb, and nevertheless to be burning with agitation. She did not dare to lift up her eyes . . . . soon tears began to stream from them, and she fell at the physician's feet.

"Rise, I entreat you . . . . Without this I will do all you desire," said Antony, raising her.

"I will not rise, worthy man, till thou doest what I ask. Be a father, be a brother to me; help me, or I will lay hands on myself—I will drown myself!" . . . .

And the pretty young woman clasped his knees, sobbing.

"Explain, Bartholomew, what she desireth of me."

"This is the matter," replied the printer with a grin. "This is the same woman . . . . I explained, methinks, on the first day of your arrival, most high worshipful sir . . . . that she is in love with the son of your host."

The widow Selínova interrupted him in confusion, forgetting that the physician understood very little Russian.—"True, true! for him I forgot virtue while my husband was alive; I forgot my race and blood; I forgot censorious neighbours; shame!—I

forgot that there were other people in the world besides him. For him I gave up my soul. When he was leading me astray—when he was turning my head—he called me his bright sun, his never-setting star: he prevailed by such tales as these—'That day when I forget my love, may my swift feet break under me, my manly hands fall powerless; may sand be strewn over my eyes, may my white breast be covered with the plank!' See now, in my blue eyes there is no ray—not a spark. My lover hath no faith in his false heart: all his words are deceit. My beloved is enamoured of another, who dwelleth with the brother of Phomínishna. And who is she to rival me? In what is she better than I? Perhaps she is better, because she admits to the bed of Andréi Phómitch a succession of fickle youths! She hath enchanted—the accursed Greek!—my curled lover. Ever since that day, the faithless boy laugheth at my caresses, and answereth my love with such mockery as this—'The heart loveth freedom, and slavery is a shame to the brave! Get thee gone—go to the fiend! If thou wilt not leave me alone, I will take wood from the court, I will make a pile, and I will burn thy fair body even to ashes; I will scatter the dust in the plain, and none shall mourn

or weep for thee.' Whatever I do, I cannot cease to love him. I track his steps; I wither away, I pine. Thou see'st I would fain not weep; even though mine eyes were dry, my heart would sob. Have pity on me! have mercy, good man! Tear him from the accursed Greek by the powers of good or ill—restore him to me. Take for thy good service my hammered chests, my precious treasures—pearls of orient! Take all that I have, but give me back my lover as he was of old, my beloved!"

When Selínova had concluded her prayer, Bartholomew translated it as well as he could. Submitting to the prejudices of his times and of his heart, Antony did not laugh at her. He himself, as well as his instructors, was firmly convinced that there exists a secret science which can influence, by attraction and repulsion, the poles of the heart. Besides this, with his good-nature, was it possible to laugh at feelings so ardent and so strong, which had induced a young woman to forget shame so far as to come and implore a stranger's help? But how to assist her? Unfortunately, Antony was ignorant of the occult science: to refuse Selínova's request would be to drive her to despair. "Time," he thought, "will bring her a better cure; let us leave it to time.

I will tell her that, for the completion of the necessary incantations, two, three, new moons are requisite, according to circumstances: that I must have a personal intercourse with Khabár—with the Greek."

And he acted accordingly. Only in addition to his advice, he took her white hand, placed her on a seat, consoled her, and promised her all kinds of aid: and the pretty widow, whether tranquillized by his assurances, or feeling a new sentiment towards the handsome stranger, or by the desire of taking revenge on her former lover, departed from the physician feeling almost consoled. The old song is right—

> " O, a yoúng widow weepeth as the déw doth fáll;
> Upríseth the béaming sun, the déw drieth up."

The proverb—" it never rains, but it pours," was exemplified on this occasion: never had the physician prescribed to a patient so nauseous a draught as Bartholoméw made him swallow at each of his visits. On the following day, again a reception—again the appearance of the inevitable translator. With him came the boyárin Mamón. The union of these two personages boded no good; but the printer had been pretty well frightened by the leech: was he come again to demand some absurdity?

Was it really so? "The pitcher goeth oft to the well, and is broken at last." It was not money nor pleasures that the Interpreter sought in his mediation. No—his passion was to obtain the good-will of others; in any manner, with any person—even against his own interest. He was ready to lie for another, for himself, so that he could in any way curry favour. That he had himself known Antony in Germany an old man, withered, white-haired—that Antony was a most mighty necromancer—could make old men young—could enchant cold and faithless hearts—could bewitch wood, iron, houses, whole towns;—these reports were all fictions of Bartholomew's. O, when it came to inventing, he was no fool! Believe or not, that was no affair of his! But that he was believed, was proved by all the patients that he had brought to the young physician. A new proof of this was the boyárin Mamón: himself the son of a witch, burned by the Prince of Mojáisk for intercourse with the Evil One, he had already been terrified by the leech's proposal to transfuse his blood in exchange for that of the little deacon; and the boyárin had now recourse to the magic of the heretic. It may be guessed that what he needed was power to work death and mischief; and it was

indeed no trifle. He came to request him, in the first place, to drive Anastasia mad with love for his son; in the second, to enchant a steel, so that it might not betray himself or that unhappy son, in the event of a judicial combat.

"What would the baron?" enquired Antony.

Mamón was no coward, but he was awestruck when it was necessary to have recourse to supernatural aid. Trembling, he pointed to the interpreter.

"The baron," continued the interpreter, remembering the intractable character of the leech, and anxious to get safe and sound out of the adventure, which his passion for making himself useful had made him undertake—"the baron . . . . as you see . . . . . hath a swelling in his liver" . . . .

"I see nothing," interrupted the physician.

"As you know, I meant to say. Then at times he hath a whirling in the head, and sinkings of the heart; and then again, something after the manner of a consumption; and again at times, something after the manner of an hydropisy; at times" . . . .

"At times death, too, I suppose. Either all these diseases exist only in the baron's imagination, or you, good Master Interpreter—be not offended—are

pleased to lie. As far as I can judge from the patient's eyes and complexion, both tinged with a saffron hue, he hath simply an overflow of bile; and therefore I counsel him chiefly to give way less frequently to fits of choler; and, in addition to this, to use (so and so)" . . . .

Here Antony advised him to take an infusion of various herbs exceedingly common, and such as might probably be found in the neighbourhood of Moscow.

Bartholomew communicated all this to Mamón in the following fashion:—"Thou must procure, boyárin, at the new moon, two young toads of different sexes; keep them together where thou judgest fit, three days and three nights, by day in the beams of the sun, by night under the rays of the moon; then bury them alive together at midnight, at the full of the moon, in the forest, in an ant-hill; and on the next night take out of the male toad a hook which he hath under his heart, but the toad of the female sex leave in the ant-hill. With this hook let your son catch the maiden, calling her by her name" . . . .

The physician shook his head, and said—"Thou art a cheat!"

"A cheat, a cheat!" cried somebody from behind the door; and the poor interpreter, surrounded on every side by a sudden attack, trembling like a leaf, neither dead nor alive, stopped short at the magic cry. He had not strength to move his tongue, he dared not even turn round.

The door flew open, and the chill of death seemed to breathe from it on the culprit. The detector stood outside, and had consequently heard all. He appeared, armed with the flaming sword of proof. It was Andrióusha. There was no escape. Bartholomew looked at his judge . . . . In that glance were united abject fear, entreaty, hope, apprehension, torture; the glance was so eloquent, that Andrióusha was moved to save the unhappy culprit; but remembering that the cheater had made a tool of his friend, and that now he could put an end, once for all, to the translator's rogueries, he abandoned him as a sacrifice to his angry dupes.

"If Master Court Interpreter," cried the son of Aristotle, "translates as correctly as that the German papers and treaties between our great lord and the ambassadors, we may congratulate Russia on some rare strokes of policy. On thy knees, this instant —this moment, Master Bartholomew!—and beg for

pardon. Thou wilt be lucky if the leech and the boyárin only drag thee out by the ears, on condition that thou never again show thy face before them!"

Obeying the boy's angry look and command, the unfortunate printer fell on his knees, folding his hands pitifully on his breast, and bending his eyes on the ground. He had not a word to say for himself.

Andrióusha explained to his friend and the boyárin, how he had followed the interpreter (whom he had long counted a liar,) and had listened to his translation. He then gave the true version. Detected in this cheat, the interpreter confessed to the villanous reports respecting Antony which he had so busily circulated through Moscow. Mamón was about to fly at him, and would have fairly throttled him; but Ehrenstein protected the poor devil, begging the boyárin to content himself with the punishment already inflicted of terror and humiliation. On this occasion, the new and eloquent little translator explained to the boyárin how much the inhabitants of Moscow were mistaken in considering the physician a sorcerer: that science had only given him the knowledge of natural powers, and of the mode of employing them for the benefit of humanity:

that even if there existed in the world other powers to attract or to repel, by means of which a man acquainted with their secret influences might perform things apparently supernatural, yet that he—Antony the leech—was unhappily ignorant of those powers, and was himself but a seeker after them; and therefore that he must refuse every person who should ask his aid in such matters. But as a physician, he hoped by the help of God, and of science which is also God's gift, to cure the sick; and he was ready, without any distinction of time or weather, without any views of interest, to be useful to any one who had the least need of his assistance.

Thus finished another unsuccessful consultation.

"It seems that I am fated to burn bricks here too," said the physician, sadly to his little friend, when the boyárin, followed by the printer, had departed.

"Raise the sick from his bed!" thought Mamón, with a sneer; "what old woman's songs would this poticarier sing us! . . . . . The man who is fated to live will rise through the ice-hole—from under a falling house can he leap, and arise from the grave. Him who is fated to die, even the staff of Iván Vassílievitch cannot raise. Let him get a beard, and then he may make acquaintance with the Fiend.

The Devil would carry a hundred such Almayne quacksalvers at his belt: better go to the witch, or to the Jew with the book of Adam!"

Nevertheless the boyárin, though he laughed at the leech's ignorance of sorcery, determined to keep silence on this point. "Let him have the reputation of being an enchanter, one who is acquainted with the secrets of the foul fiend!" said the boyárin to himself, as he descended the stairs—"I, too, will exert myself to spread the report: the more terrible we can make the power of the German, the more bitter will he be to my good friend!"

"Ho, Insatiate!" he said, looking at a tall peasant, as pale as a corpse, who was standing on the steps—"What dost thou here?"

"I would see Antony the leech—assuredly to be healed."

"Go to him, go! His devil is stronger than thine, than the one that is in thee. He will speedily fight him, and drive him away."

The boyárin had hardly time to pronounce these words, when the voice of Andrióusha, calling the sick man, was heard above in the hall.

He was nicknamed Insatiate, from the nature of his disease. He ate much—incredibly much—some-

times enough to make a meal for four healthy men; and yet he was always hungry. His countenance expressed deep-seated disease; yet the eyes had a kind of supernatural *double* brilliancy and liveliness, as if, by some mistake of nature, two beings were looking through them, enclosed in a single body. This double expression of the eyes struck the physician. The following was the account, which, in answer to the leech's questions, Insatiate gave of his disorder:—

"He was a driver. Once, in the night-time, he had chanced to stop with his vehicle at a village inn, where there arrived, almost at the same time with him, a merchant with two horses from a distant country. Apparently this merchant was very fond of his steeds; for while he himself ate as sparingly as a monk in the first ages of Christianity, he gave abundance of oats to his 'flesh and blood,' as he called them, and expressed great delight that they fed so well. The merchant complained only of one thing; namely, that fate had not given him the means of feeding them on fine barley, giving them honey mixed with their water, keeping them in velvet meadows, of petting them, of never wearying them with work. Apparently he was rather simple, or a very

good Christian, as he trusted in the honesty of his neighbour. These remarks, confirmed by the temptation of the Evil One, led the driver into a bad action. Hardly had the merchant found time to pour, with fatherly care, a good bellyful before his pets, and to enter the izbá contented and easy about them, when the driver, following him to the door with his eyes, pilfered the oats from the stranger's horses, and gave them to his own. The food which he had bought for them at the last baiting-place would remain for another time. His horses almost burst themselves, while the merchant's steeds—his pets, his joy, the pride of his heart—could hardly catch a grain. The guests came out into the court, crossed themselves, and exchanged the usual Christian salutations; as they had arrived from different quarters, so they departed, each by his own road. From that moment the merchant had never been heard of. At first the driver laughed at him in his sleeve; but on and on he went, his mind growing gloomier and gloomier, till at last his soul was as dark as a wolf's throat. Already it began to be no laughing matter. From that day forward he grew ill at ease. One day he was on the road as usual. It was eventide. A stifling heat lay on the earth—it felt as when the evil

spirit is throttling the sleeper who has no strength to escape. The sky seemed like a wall of redhot iron. Afar, lights now darted along like serpents, and then again spun like a top. He was plodding on knee-deep in sand: hunchbacked, dwarfish fir-trees stood, like sentinels, along the road. When you think you have passed them, look beside you, and there they are, shaking their grizzled heads, and clawing at you with their hooked talons! Twas very eerie! The driver was alone: if he could but have spied a dwelling! Weariness and thirst were torturing him: his breast seemed on fire: his lips are parched up; but suddenly the lightning flashes on the stagnant surface of a marshy pool like a filthy sewer. The driver rushes to it: a thick rusty slime covers it with a greenish bloody mantle, which is cut in various directions by loathsome insects, darting quickly along it as if they were skating; or by bursting bubbles, blown up by the inhabitants of its depths. It was horrible to look at this pool; what then would it be to drink from it? What was to be done? Thirst conquered abhorrence. The driver scooped up a hatful of the water; he blew on it to force aside the filthy scum—crossed himself—and, shutting his eyes, drank. At that instant—he knew not how; he could

give no account of it—he remembered the merchant and his horses. Something began to lie heavy at his heart: in three days he felt as if a stone was pressing on his breast beneath the brisket; and this stone seemed to be alive, to move, and suck at his heart."

"Ah, I understand!" cried Antony with delight, like a person who has just guessed a difficult riddle, over which he has been beating his brains. "But go on."

The driver continued, breathing heavily from time to time, like a labourer who has been lifting a great weight. Pressing close up to the physician, Andriousha listened, and translated the story into Italian. Antony devoured every word with eagerness.

"From that hour," said Insatiate, "I have never had a moment's ease; and, above all, I can never satisfy my hunger, however much I eat. Even though I eat a loaf as large as a man's head, and a whole sheep, I am still hungry. I have been to the wise women—the wise women straightway guessed that I had stolen the oats from the stranger's horses, but they could do nothing for me. Wherever I went they always told me the same. What money have I not paid? What oats have I not given to strangers' horses? What work have I not done in

monasteries?—All was in vain. Every where they call me the Insatiate. This word hath become a jeer; the boys mock me with it, and throw stones at me. Thou see'st these five bones!" (he showed his gigantic fist.) "I could smash any one I pleased. But what good would that do?" (Insatiate shook his head;) "and I do not shake them off even. There is a stone in my bosom heavier than those they cast at me; there it seemeth to be planted! Hark, how it rumbles! Dost thou hear it? And then they call me Insatiate! Oh, it is heavy—so heavy! If I could but depart from the light of day! . . . . Help me, good man! drive it out of me! I will be thy bond slave to my dying day; though they say that thou art an accursed Latiner, a German heretic—worse than a Tartar!"

And Insatiate, as he finished his story, wept—wept bitterly.

Having made the necessary medical examination, Antony said—"Yes, in thy body there is nested a living animal. With the help of God I will drive out of thee this horrible creature, and thou wilt be well. Pray to the most Holy Virgin; and when the Italian Aristotle shall build her temple, labour thou at the foundation of the altar."

Insatiate promised, and with lively confidence gave himself up to the leech's will. The cure was complete; the next day the patient got rid of a toad, which he had probably swallowed in an embryo state in the stagnant water. When completely recovered, he every where sang the praises of the leech Antony, and in his daily prayers remembered gratefully the German's name; imploring God to convert him to the true faith. The Russian people explained this cure after their own fashion.

CHAPTER II.

THE ENCHANTMENT.

There flew the nightingale
By the greenwood, by the green underwood,
By the greenwood, by the birchen grove,
Flew away the nightingale
To a green garden, she knew not where;
Then perched the nightingale
Upon a branch, she knew not where.
O that branch, how it allured her then!
O that greenwood, how it charmed her then!
How she loved it, that nightingale,
Singing, how she joyed in it!
She never will depart from it.

WHAT was doing during this interval in the other half of the Stone Palace? It is time to cast a glance in that direction.

The sojourn of the heretic in Obrazétz's palace threw a gloom around it: it seemed as if the mark of an anathema had been fixed upon the house; and, therefore, all its inhabitants cursed and hated the foul German. Every day were spread fresh reports

of his connexion with the Evil One, and of his wicked deeds. At one time they saw the devil flying to him down the chimney in the form of a shooting star, or troops of young witches rushing to meet him. At another, they enjoined all fathers and mothers to conceal their children, particularly such as were handsome; they say he steals them, in order to become young and beautiful by drinking their blood. They informed one another in confidence that he had enchanted a sword for Mamón, in case of the judicial combat; that he had cast out an evil spirit, in the shape of a toad, from Insatiate, and that he kept this imp in a bottle to let loose upon the first person who should offend him; that when passing by the churches, he dreads even to walk in their shadow. They not unfrequently observe that the deacon Kourítzin, the greatest of heretics, visited him at dead of night, when all good people were asleep, and passed the hours of darkness with him in devilish ceremonies; and that they had seen the Evil One fly out of the chimney in a wreath of smoke. Did one of the male or female slaves die in the house?—'Twas the heretic's fault. They were compelled to get *living fire*, (by rubbing two pieces of wood together.—Note, in the evening, when all the fires of the house were put out, and even

that in the ovens was quenched with water;) they made a pile, and forced every domestic animal to jump over it, to purify it from the demon-influence. All the inhabitants of the Stone Palace (that is to say, on the boyárin's side) approached this sacred fire to light their candles at it. The fresh *living fire* was distributed about the house, and lighted it up afresh. It was lucky if the *Master's* heart was even now satisfied by these purifying rites. From this time the four-footed animals enjoyed the desired health: from this time, too, the inhabitants of the palace began to *sweep up for the night*, that the guardian angels might have free liberty in the hours of sleep to wander round the slumberers; without running the danger of stumbling against any thing, and being thereby offended.

Obrazétz could find no means of getting rid of his terrible guest, and no way of releasing himself from his heretical bondage. Beg Iván Vassílievitch to loose his chains—he dared not: Antony the leech was rising higher day by day in the Great Prince's favour. In his affliction the boyárin frequently compared himself with the much-suffering Job; all whose sorrows, he thought, he would willingly have accepted in exchange for this state of imprisonment.

The half-christened lad, Antony's servant, was much attached to him. "Birds of a feather flock together," said the people of the boyárin's side; and they never permitted the youth, under any pretext, to appear in that quarter. Even Andrióusha, since he became intimate with the heretic, was not received by Obrazétz so affectionately as before; and he was obliged, whenever he approached the boyárin, to purify himself by washing. Anastasia, however, loved her godson as much as ever, and found even more than her former delight in conversing with him —About what?—can you guess?—about the heretic.

About the heretic! . . . . Is it possible?

Now you must know, good people, Anastasia was bewitched.

The sorcerer had bewitched her from the first moment she beheld him: of this Anastasia was firmly convinced. How otherwise explain what she felt towards the German?—him who was linked with the fiends? To whom had they told so much ill about the heretic as to her? What? after all the charms against the Evil Eye that her nurse had mumbled over her; after all the sprinkling of holy water with Thursday's salt* infused in it, and coals; after

* Thursday's Salt—On Thursday in Easter week salt is burned

the cares of the whole swarm of her tierwomen; after all the advice of her father, of the whole household —and of her own sense swayed by common prejudices; the foul German, the Latiner, the necromancer, hardly reached the staircase, ere Anastasia had managed to send away her nurse, her guardian maidens; prejudice, fear, shame—and there she was at the sliding window!

It is to be remarked, that the sliding window is a characteristic peculiar to the Russian people: even in our own times, compel a Russian merchant or peasant to make double casements for the winter; he will perhaps make them, but he will nevertheless always leave one window free—that can be opened or shut as he pleases with a sliding door. Without this window, his house feels to him like a prison—close, stifling, and gloomy: he would, rather than have no free opening, knock out a pane of glass: what cares he, the iron child of the north, for the frost! Surrounded with snow, in the bitterest cold,

or roasted with an egg; and a quantity is preserved in every house. This salt is supposed to possess great medicinal and anti-magical properties; and is given to the sick cattle, &c. &c., on various occasions. A portion is always eaten with the first food taken after the fasts, in order that this food may not hurt the stomach, &c.—T. B. S.

he opens his beloved little window, and through it admires God's light, the midnight sky, strewn with angel eyes. He looks out at the passengers going and coming, listens to their gossiping talk, hearkens with a kind of delighted sympathy to the rustling sound of the belated traveller's step upon the snowy road, to the distant tinkle of the sledge-bell dying faintly along the wintry desert—sounds which have a pensive attraction for the Russian heart.

In Anastasia's solitude, the sliding window which had replaced one of the Italian casements of her bower, had afforded her also much amusement: it was destined to have a powerful influence on her fate, from the hour when she first beheld from it the young and handsome foreigner. In spite of herself she was attracted to that window; in spite of herself she gazed through its modest solitary little pane, or had even ventured to slide it back, but in such a manner as she could not be seen. The little pane was always bright and clean; but when the fierce frost breathed upon it, what would she not do to get rid of its snowy dimness!

There he was—the sorcerer—the handsome stranger! How the fire of his blue eyes seemed to devour the distance! How his fair face seemed to

rival the snow, when the first ray of morning streams upon it! What a well-knit, active form—what a noble walk! How well his rich dress became him! He seemed himself to have all the luxurious softness of the velvet. Anastasia's heart beat violently, as if it had been struggling to burst from her bosom and fly towards him—it ultimately sank and fluttered. She admires him, she watches him to the gate like a faithful slave who watches his master as he departs—she devours his footsteps. There is the clink of the latch—he is gone . . . . Her heart dies away, as though he were plunged into eternity. She is sad, very sad; she is weary of the light of day; but the enchanter returns . . . . and Anastasia awaits him, minutes, hours, even a whole day. The poor girl cannot eat, or if she forces herself to swallow any thing, 'tis only to conceal from the household her sickness of the heart. Yes, she is ill; she is bewitched.

Frequently she questions herself as to the cause of her sorrow; she demands from her heart an account why it loves a stranger, a heretic, whom all good people shun, and her sire curses; whose religion was banned by the fathers of the church. "Enchantment!" cried her conclusion; "there neither is

nor can be any other cause." Often she turns to the Mother of God—with burning tears she implores her to save her from the snares of the tempter. For two or three minutes she is more easy; but again the image of the handsome foreigner lives before her sight, sits by her side, and holds her hand in his. If she shuts her eyes, the very same unearthly being which she saw in the visions of childhood, the very same, only with the glance, the smile of the German, is lying at her feet, folding its white pinions. She awakes, and anguish, like a venomed sting, is buried deep in her heart. Sometimes she hears enchanting sounds, (Antony was playing on the lute;) there is the celestial voice; there are the self-sounding dulcimers that in the visions of her infancy had rung so sweetly through her heart.

Occasionally Andrióusha comes from the physician to his godmother: her conversation was upon one subject alone—about the enchanter. Andrióusha relates with warmth how good his friend is, how affectionate, how feeling; he endeavours by every kind of tender caresses, to prove to her the injustice of the evil reports about the leech; he swears by all that is holiest in the world, that Antony is not a witch, nor Tartar heretic, but a Christian like

themselves, only not of the Russian faith. Anastasia longed to believe, but dared not, dared not—could not. He no magician! Why then did she love him, when he had never spoken a syllable to her; when he had never beheld her—not even once? How could he be a Christian, and not of the Russian faith? and not wear a cross on his breast? The poor maiden could neither guess nor understand. Only when Andrióusha prepares to return to the physician, Anastasia gives her godson a sweet farewell kiss, and involuntarily, with her satin-soft hand, signs him with the cross. Did she not wish to send both the caress and the holy sign to the stranger? And all her thoughts were on the handsome foreigner, and at all times, in all places, he—he alone—was with her.

It was decided that she was sick—that she was bewitched.

But the young physician, entirely devoted to science, had forgotten that there existed such a person in the world as Anastasia.

Thus passed several weeks.

The Feast of the Annunciation arrived: throughout the city on every side arose the sound of bells; almost all the human beings in the boyárin's quarter

had crowded to the house of God. There remained at home only Anastasia, her faithful nurse, a few of her women, and several other servants. The nurse, the maidens, the servants, every one in his or her own corner, had lighted their tapers and were saying their prayers: Anastasia had finished her devotions, and was seated by the fatal window. A kind of holy stillness brooded over the whole house; no knocking was heard at the door, the latch tinkled not at the gate, no causeless word broke the deep silence. To disturb it would have seemed sacrilege. On Antony's side there was the same calm and stillness: he was sitting pensively at the window. Was he thinking of the prayers of his fellow-Christians in the cathedrals of his second fatherland, Italy, the friendly pressure of his learned preceptor's hand, the enchanting smile and burning glances of the maidens, or the caresses and blessings of his mother? Did he not feel his rude exile from the domestic life of Moscow—his loneliness?

All was quiet in the house as in a desert. At length he heard over-head footsteps . . . . the steps of a virgin, and of one, as he had been assured, most lovely, benevolent, and good. How many attractions swarmed around her! She is, like him—alone. 'Tis as though they were alone in the house—alone

on earth. Did they not understand each other? Did not their souls unite through the frail partition that divided them? Who could tell? . . . . He had often told Andrióusha that between them two and Anastasia there existed a magic, threefold bond. Why had he destroyed this bond by his indifference? Why was not Andrióusha with him, to talk about the lovely Anastasia, to let him take from him her kiss, her blessing—again to knit that threefold bond?

Again the bells rang out; the service in some of the churches had concluded.

Andrióusha appeared at his thought. This time he was announced by the chirping and fluttering of various kinds of birds. All out of breath, rosy with haste, he rushed into the chamber: in his hand he holds a triumphant trophy of the solemn festival, a huge cage with a multitude of feathered inhabitants. They were bulfinches, larks, and chaffinches—all harbingers of the bounteous spring. This was a present to Andrióusha from the children of the Great Prince. Poor prisoners, how they beat against their dungeon walls!

"What meanest thou to do with them?" said Antony.

"The window . . . . open the window!" cried

the boy with rapture. "Dost thou not know to-day is the Annunciation?"

Antony obeyed with pleasure his little friend's desire. The window was opened, and through it the fresh vernal air floated into the room. The sun threw into it sheaves of dazzling gold, as if rejoicing in the first festival of the year. Hundreds of birds darted hither and thither through the air, or chirped and sang upon the trees, which were now putting forth their buds; others were perched on the roofs and walls.—"Dost thou not hear how they keep holiday on their day of liberty, as if they, too, had glad tidings to tell?" said Andrióusha: "To-day they free the winged prisoners; to-day, too, they set at liberty those who have been imprisoned for debt."

"What a beautiful custom!" * said the physician; "it reconcileth me to the Russians. Thy father speaketh true; beneath the coarse covering of their manners lie concealed many excellent qualities."

During this time Andrióusha was opening the doors of the cage.

* This beautiful custom is still kept up in many parts of Russia. Small birds are sometimes served up alive, in pie-crust, so that "when the pie is opened the birds begin to sing," as the nursery rhyme hath it.—T. B. S.

"Go ye, also," he cried, "and bear glad tidings!" and the prisoners, one struggling before the other, hurried thronging from their confinement. Many of them instantly vanished out of sight; others, as if wondering at their unexpected liberty, perched hard by, pruning their wings and gazing around them. Only at the bottom of the cage, in a separate division, there remained one bird. Andrióusha gazed at it some time with wistful indecision.—"This one sang so sweetly all the winter in my room," he said sorrowfully.

Antony replied not, but looked in his face as if interceding for the poor prisoner: the boy, with the swiftness of lightning understood him.

"True," he cried; "this little bard sang for me so long, that I ought to be the more ready to release him. But he must receive his freedom from my godmother; he is so pretty!"

And the boy disappeared with his precious bird.

In a few minutes Antony heard a casement open in the chamber over-head; he stretched himself as far as he could out of his own window, looked up . . . . . first, a small white hand waved in the air, then a little singing-bird darted away from it, and then there was drawn, as it were, against the sky,

the face of a girl, (never in his life had he beheld any thing so lovely,) and then there fell upon his whole being the earnest enchanting gaze of a pair of dark eyes, and in a moment the fair vision . . . . was gone. He felt as if his senses were departing; he seemed riveted to the spot; a dim mist darkened his eyes; when he returned to himself, Antony strove to reduce his thoughts to order . . . . What had he seen! Was it a being of earth, or a dweller of the heavens? . . . . He remembered the wondrous outline of the face, and the soft glow that seemed dawning on it, and the languishing yet burning glance, and the long dark-brown hair which fell carelessly from the window, and the white fairy hand: all this was graven on his heart. We have already said that he had never yet known love for any woman—the stronger therefore was the feeling that now overwhelmed him so suddenly. It was at once the sensation of loneliness, of a life in a strange land, the thirst of a burning soul; a soul loving, yet hitherto veiled with a covering of cold reserve, by circumstances—a thirst to unite with a soul that could understand him—to communicate his elevated hopes, even though they were destined to be deceived—his aspirations towards all that was noble—to

share all this with a living being. The fountain had been concealed for ages beneath a ponderous rock; the rock was struck by the thunderbolt, and the fount burst forth like living silver. Stop its flowing if ye can! This was love, such as is felt for the first and last time by strong and extraordinary minds. "Perhaps, too, it was the love of romance," you say—you may add, 'twas the love of the fifteenth century; a century marked with the distinctive stamp of the marvellous, and which had not yet thrown off its iron panoply, tempered in the fire of chivalry.

From this time Anastasia was no longer to Antony a mere creature of the imagination—that name was no longer a union of empty sounds, a mere word. In her was joined all earthly and heavenly loveliness, purity, goodness, intellect, strength of soul. In her person he glorified nature, humanity, God himself. She was his tie to Russia; his ark of life and death. From this time his solitude was peopled; it was inhabited by Anastasia. His love was uncalculating, unreasoning; it was wholly in its source—the heart. Reason had no part in it; it was pure, as the cloudless heaven. No dark thought or intention troubled this sentiment; he desired

nothing but to behold Anastasia—but to look upon her. The fear, however, of wounding her, of drawing suspicion upon her, quenched this desire within him. He never again ventured to open the window beneath her chamber: it might be remarked by her father, her brother, the neighbours; they might think some evil of the maiden. But he often listened—did not the window tinkle over-head? No; all was still.

On entering or quitting the house he never again saw Anastasia; but once, on returning home, he found on the steps a branch which had been thrown from above; a parrot's feather, which had been presented by Sophia Phomínishna to the Great Prince's little favourite, and had passed from Andrea to the boyárin's daughter; and once he found a riband from her hair. He knew from whence came these precious things; he understood their speechless language, and in his happiness he prized them higher than all the favours of Iván Vassílievitch.

CHAPTER III.

THE FUGITIVE.

And Iván Vassílievitch *did* show marked favour to the physician. At one time he would send him a gracious message; at another, a command to *behold* his *royal eyes*, or a dish from his table, or a piece of German cloth for clothes. He frequently had conversations with him. Antony began to express himself tolerably well in Russian: he, however, still employed an interpreter; generally Andrióusha or Aristotle, who delighted with all his soul in the advancement of his brother's pupil. These conversations were generally about the affairs of Italy, so well known to Ehrenstein. The Great Prince was particularly fond of hearing accounts how the Roman Empire, once so mighty, was withering away, divided into petty republics; and from these relations his strength of character enabled him to draw a lesson profitable to himself. Antony informed him in what

order, at no very remote peried, there had been established a post-office, first in France, and afterwards in the German states. Iván Vassílievitch introduced into his own country posts and stations. Antony explained to him other new inventions in Europe, and the Great Prince prepared to profit by them on the first opportunity.

By such influence and mediation as that of Antony, the contemporary and powerful development of civilization in the West, found in the clear-sighted soul of Iván an echo, rude indeed, uncalculating, hardly recognizing its own powers of the spirit of improvement that spoke through the daughter of Palæologos, the German and Russian ambassadors, the artists, the physicians, and travellers. In the West, dexterity exhibited in the cabinets of sovereigns; discussions carried on through accredited envoys; an active school and arena for subtle and crafty intellects, which had received the designation of "politics," or "diplomacy," had begun to take the place of armies. These arms were skilfully wielded by Iván Vassílievitch also; the other nations and sovereigns were beginning to concentrate their power; the same thing was done by the Russian Great Prince when he united his provinces into one

whole. There the idea of royal power enveloped itself in solemn and splendid ceremonies and forms, acting through them upon the feelings of the mass. The court precedence, kissing of hands, magnificent receptions of foreign ambassadors, banquets, ranks, heraldry, titles, give form to this idea even among us. In the West the system of regular warfare was established. Iván was also instituting regiments. I have already alluded to the introduction of posts. We have seen, too, how the spirit of intellectual inquisitiveness, which gave to the fifteenth century Wicliffe, Huss, and lastly, Luther, had been communicated to our Russia under the form of the Jewish heresy: in a word, the then life of Europe, though under coarser forms, has descended even to us. It is not my business to explain here why that life, after Iván III., did not receive among us a gradual development, and one which led to more important and specific results.

We have seen that Iván Vassílievitch was concentrating the power of his throne and of Russia. Tver separated him from the northern provinces: he determined, by fair means or foul, to annihilate this barrier, and to unite the heart of Russia with its northern members. Having previously secured con-

fidéntial partisans in Tver, and having discovered, as we have seen in the first volume of our romance, a pretext for declaring war against its prince, Iván Vassílievitch was assembling troops, in order to overthrow, by one effort, the power he had so long been undermining by artifice.

All the land of Russia began to be moved.

While the armament of Moscow was preparing for the campaign, another body of troops was ordered from Nóvgorod. The Russians, in the time of Iván Vassílievitch, had more than once tasted military glory. There were therefore, on the present occasion, a multitude of volunteers eager to seek it. The direction of the artillery was confided to Aristotle, who was torn away for this purpose from his great work. The artist once more had to transform himself into an engineer.

In order that this army might be committed to a worthy leader, they were awaiting at Moscow the celebrated voevóda, the Prince Daníel Dmítrii Khólmskii, whom a sickness, real or pretended, had detained in his distant possessions. Pretended, I say, and no wonder, as he was a Tveritchánin (native of Tver) by birth: a descendant of the princes of Tver, and must obviously have been unwilling to

obey his sovereign's command in going against his native land.

The court physician also was commanded to *mount on horseback*. His duty attached him to the person of the Great Prince, who intended himself to accompany the army. Iván Vassílievitch, under the shield of his general, desired to earn for himself the title of "conqueror of Tver." It was with delight that Ehrenstein received this order, which would give him the means of in some measure distracting his thoughts from Anastasia, and offered him the hope of being serviceable to the cause of humanity. With these hopes also mingled his inborn spirit of chivalry, which was to be appeased neither by education nor by the modest pacific profession of the leech. Nature, in spite of himself, attracted him towards that destiny from which he had been torn by the vengeance of Fioraventi. These hopes were also cherished by Aristotle, who coveted for his brother's pupil new honours and new advantages.

After a day passed in the squares where the troops were mustering, Antony had lain down, but could not sleep; whether it was that he was agitated by the thoughts of Anastasia, whose form flitted before him like a fair enchanting vision, or of the expedi-

tion, which was represented by his ardent imagination, his noble heart, as an enchanting picture. Suddenly, in the midst of these reveries, which prevented him from sleeping, he heard strange cries in the street. They shouted—"Seize him! seize him! hither, here, this way! To Obrazétz's palace: we will answer for him with our heads!"

Antony opened the window towards the street: the night was so dark, that the city seemed buried in the bowels of the earth; objects were all fused into one black mass; he could just distinguish the movements of several figures, at one moment leaping over the railing or grate, at another vanishing into the gloom: he followed them rather by ear than by sight.

But look! something is moving close to the house . . . . something scrambles up the wall, and—before him is a tall, an unusually tall figure, blocking up almost the whole window. It must have required superhuman strength and activity to climb up the wall to such a height; this thought, and the unexpectedness of the apparition, caused Antony, at the first moment of surprise, to start back in alarm.—"Save me, in the name of God, save me!" said the unknown in a low voice; and without waiting for an

answer, he leaped into the room with such violence and suddenness, that he almost knocked the physician off his feet; and then cautiously closed the window.

Antony knew not what to think of this apparition—nor had he time. The tall figure stands before him as if mounted on stilts, feels him all over, seizes him by the hand, presses it, and pantingly exclaims in a low voice—"Save me! . . . . the constables are after me . . . . they would put me in chains. My friend . . . . but art thou he . . . . or Iván Khabár?"

"No! but 'tis all the same . . . . what wouldst thou?" replied the leech, guessing that the unhappy man, flying from pursuit, was seeking to conceal himself in the house of his friend Obrazétz.—A friend of the voevóda, he thought, cannot be a bad man.

"No! . . . . great Heaven! who then art thou? . . . . Ah, I understand . . . . the German leech . . . . I am lost!"

And, as he spoke, he took a step back, as though he were about to throw himself out of the window.

Antony held him back, and said with extraordinary force and earnestness, in as good Russian as

he could . . . . "Yes, I am the leech; but I am a Christian too, as well as the Russians. Fear nothing. Trust in me, in the name of the Mother of God."

"Well, in the name of the Mother of God. By thy voice I feel that thou art no traitor. Now I will tell thee: I am—the voevóda Prince Khólmskii; perhaps thou hast heard of me?"

"Aristotle hath told me much of the famous conqueror of Nóvgorod."

"And that conqueror, at the command of the Great Prince, they are now chasing . . . . they would chain him, they would throw him into a dungeon!"

"How so? They expect thee even now from thy possessions, to entrust to thee the army of Moscow, which is going against Tver."

"I arrived, was with Iván Vassílievitch . . . Tver is my native land . . . . I refused to go . . . . But hark! They are knocking at the gate as if the fire bell were ringing. Save me from the fetters, from deep shame!"

"O, if it be so, I will save thee, even if I have to pay for it with my life! It is only across my dead body that they shall reach thee."

In reality, they were knocking at the gate till the

very walls of the house trembled: they shouted—"Open the gate . . . . In the name of the Lord Great Prince, open! . . . . or we will beat it in!"

The knocks, shouting, and uproar, increased every moment.

All in the house were fast asleep—all were thrown into confusion, and started to their feet: the boyárin, his daughter, and the servants, doorkeepers, falconers, poultrymen, seneschals, cooks, grooms, fire-lighters, gardeners, tirewomen, &c. &c.—all that composed the household of a boyárin in those days. The men rushed, panic-stricken, in all directions, as if the house was on fire; questioning one another about the cause of the disturbance, lighting tapers, and jostling each other. They heard the name of the Great Prince, and thought that he was perhaps come himself to seize their master, in consequence of some denunciation. The boyárin was alarmed, expecting something extraordinary, and had recourse in prayer to the heavenly Mediatress; Anastasia was half dead with terror; her brother was not at home, he was passing a night of debauch somewhere.

In the mean time Antony was actively employed. In his room stood a huge cupboard, in which he

kept his drugs. Out with the boxes and bottles—in with the prisoner!

"Speak! canst thou breathe freely?"

"Quite freely."

The prisoner crouched down on his hams; but even thus there was not room for him. What was to be done! . . . . "Down on thy knees!—So, 'tis well. God be with thee!"

The doors are locked, the boxes and bottles under the bed.

In this miserable cupboard, then, which served a heretic to keep his drugs in, in humble attitude, was placed the grandson of Vsévolod Andréevitch of Tver—the far-famed leader, the hero of Shelón, the conqueror of Nóvgorod and Kazán, the brightest gem in Iván's crown, the glory and honour of Russia; the man who made a thousand warriors, the enemies of his country, fly before him; who, standing at the head of his troops before the terrible Akhmet, in that moment which decided the fate of Russia, would not listen to the commands of his stern sovereign to retreat—now so dreaded the wrath of Iván Vassílievitch, that he concealed himself in a German's cupboard.

At the name of the Great Prince they opened the

gate. The boyárin Mamón was there with the party. He was to be found every where, where there was to be an execution of a cruel order; when his bad heart could find employment worthy of itself. Above all, he was every where to be found where he could find an opportunity to revenge himself on his enemies. At the head of the constables and the guards, he explained to Obrazétz's domestics, that, in obedience to the orders of Iván Vassílievitch, he had come to seize the Prince Daníel Dmítrievitch Khólmskii; that they had traced him from his own house to the boyárin's palace, and that he could be concealed nowhere but there. One of the constables bore in his hand a chain with which to confine the fugitive. Mamón demanded, in the Great Prince's name, that they should permit him to make search throughout the whole house.

Could Obrazétz dare to oppose the dreaded awful name!—Obrazétz, who venerated that name after the old fashion, as commanded by his parents; who enshrined it in his heart like the commandment of God!

The constables and guards, in a crowd, led by the exulting Mamón, burst into the palace like enemies, snatched the tapers from the slaves' hands, thunder-

ing, shouting, clanking chains, penetrating every where, in the chambers, the anterooms, oratory, and audience-chamber, courts, gardens, and uninhabited buildings; peering about, clattering their swords, turning every thing upside down. Even as far as Anastasia's chamber penetrated the disorderly rout. But here they encounter a barrier—virgin modesty, protected by a father's and brother's love. Here, at the door of this chamber, Mamón's approach was awaited by old Obrazétz himself and by his son, who had hastened home at the first information of a trusty servant. Both were armed. They were surrounded by a few of their bravest followers with axes and clubs, who seemed ready, at the first look of their master, to send into the other world, unhesitatingly, whomsoever that look should point out. At sight of this living barrier Mamón's steps faltered: he stopped before it with his train.

"God see'th," said Obrazétz firmly, "that the Prince Khólmskii neither is, nor can be, in my daughter's chamber. Make but one step in advance, Mamón, and (the old man trembled) thou wilt lead me into the sin of bloodshed."

"What, do we meet again, my brander?" said Mamón with a hellish laugh.

The thick white brows of the voevóda began to knit; the flash of his contracting eye glared upon his foe, and seemed to pierce him through. With his gigantic knotty hand he convulsively clutched his blade, his breast heaved like a tempest billow, and giving utterance to a kind of inarticulate sound, sank again. The boyárin's rage was appeased by the thought that blood would be spilt near his daughter's chamber. He saw the gesture of his son's arm, seized his hand, and prevented a fatal blow.

Mamón perceived this terrible by-play—he hastened to depart.

"We have not yet been to the leech's chamber," said he, preparing to descend the stairs.

"Go there, and to the devil, or to thy mother the witch; and if thou make not the more haste, beware lest thou leave thine accursed bones here!" cried Khabár-Símskii after him.

Mamón stopped, and contemptuously shaking his head, expressed his rage in a laugh, redhot from hell.

"Father, let me"—— cried Khabár, frantic with fury.

Obrazétz again stopped him, and said with energy

—"Hold, my son! Where thou wilt; but not here, by thy sister's chamber."

"Dost thou hear?" was Símskii's question, full of the thirst of vengeance.

"Ay, we hear!" was the sullen reply of Mamón.

The knocking, the running through the house, the shouting, the steps over-head at Anastasia's chamber—all these had echoed deeply into the ears and heart of Ehrenstein, who was trembling from his ignorance of what was going on in the boyárin's family. He would have given much to have been there: over-head all grew still—the noise seemed to come in his direction. It approached nearer and nearer. They knock at the door of his hall—he strikes a light.

What a misfortune—what an agony! Traces of huge feet which had lately been through mud were marked on the floor, and led, like a path, straight to the cupboard.

What is to be done? . . . . clothes, towels—every thing that comes to hand—down on the floor with them—the fatal traces are annihilated—God be thanked!

He turns towards the door—he listens. Something within the cupboard falls down with such vio-

lence that the doors tremble—then a death-rattle, then a sigh, and then the silence of the grave?

Antony's heart sank within him; his hair bristled up.

What if Khólmskii, overwhelmed by the thought of the Great Prince's anger, by the fear of imprisonment and execution, agonized with terror, exhausted by the rapidity of his flight, the exertions of climbing up the wall—by all that had come upon him at once, so terribly and unexpectedly; what if he had yielded up his life . . . . perhaps he had been suffocated in the cupboard—perhaps a fit of apoplexy . . . . it was horrible!

They would find the Prince Khólmskii dead in the leech's chamber . . . . what would report say! . . . . already he had the character of being a necromancer. They would call him a murderer: they would demand his head. The sovereign, incensed by the concealment of the fugitive, would give him up to the people: Antony knew what sort of thing was an infuriate populace—the rage of a wild beast is nothing to its cruelty. He was willing to meet and battle with death by the bedside of the sufferer —he was ready to go even to an unmerited block; he was ready to go to the battle at the call of duty;

but death, in the talons of a frantic mob—that was dreadful! And, what was still more horrible, he would be the unwilling cause of a fellow-creature's death . . . .

To look into the cupboard, to make trial of medical remedies, was an impossibility: the knocking grew momentarily more violent. To delay opening the door would be to attract suspicion on himself, and render the search more strict. Who can tell! They may break open the door, and then they will find him face to face with the fugitive!

But Khólmskii perhaps was still alive!

Neither reason, nor strength of mind, nor muscles —nothing human could save him. Only God, God alone: all his trust is in him!

Agony is in his heart: yet Antony endeavours to compose his features as circumstances require. A stiletto under his arm, a lamp in his hand, and he opens the door of the hall.

Before him is Mamón and his rout.

"What would ye with me at this hour of night?" sternly asked Antony.

"Be not offended, Master Leech," replied Mamón, bowing courteously: "by the Great Prince's order, we are seeking an important fugitive. He

hath fled hither to the boyárin's palace, and is hidden here. One of our people, methinks, said but now that he heard Khólmskii climb the wall—that thy window opened" . . . .

"'Tis false!" interrupted Ehrenstein; "climb!—his eyes must have been dazzled . . . . I am no harbourer of runaways . . . . What is the meaning of this insult? . . . . Who said that? . . . . I will complain to the Great Prince."

"'Twas not I;" "nor I," "nor I;" cried a number of voices, among which was that of the informer himself. They thought that they had been tricked by the evil spirit. They knew in what high favour the sovereign held the leech, and they dreaded the wrath of Iván Vassílievitch, for unnecessarily disturbing his favourite's repose. They dreaded, too, the vengeance of the heretic sorcerer himself, who, they were more certain than ever, was a magician, from his having learned to express himself in Russian so soon—and as there was no longer any testimony of the fugitive having been seen at his window, Mamón, for reasons of his own, did not insist.

"However," said Antony, "not to leave you in suspicion, I ask, I demand, a search."

And Mamón, followed by two constables, glan-

cing fearfully around them, and muttering a prayer, entered the leech's bed-chamber.

Every place was searched—on the bed—under the bed—in every corner. Mamón went up to the closed cupboard; and listened at it with a greedy ear. Ehrenstein collected all his courage and presence of mind, not to betray his agitation.—Nay, he even smiled, though he felt as if his heart were beating like a hammer on an anvil.

Now, if the boyárin should require the door to be opened. . . . . If Khólmskii be only in a swoon, and should come to himself just at the moment when Mamón is listening—if he should groan—or even sigh. . . . .

Being in no condition to account for his movements, Antony steals his hand nearer and nearer his stiletto.

All is silent; no one moves.

"There is no one!" said Mamón after a pause.

"There is no one!" repeated the constables in a tremulous voice.

"Where can he have hidden himself!"

"Let us search round the house."

And the rout streamed confusedly out of the leech's chamber, with divers strange remarks. One man had seen human bones pounded in a mortar;

another, bottles full of blood; a third, a child's head, (God knows what it was that fear had exhibited to him under this form;) a fourth had heard the Evil One answer their voices out of a kind of box that hung upon the wall (probably from the lute.) Poor devils! They were lucky to escape safe and sound.

God be praised—the searchers were gone! Antony listens—the latch of the gate clinks . . . . the gate slams to . . . . curses are heard on Obrazétz, on Khólmskii. A minute or two more, and all again returned to profound stillness.

The door is locked, a sheet spread before the window . . . . his trembling hand, feeling for the lock, with difficulty opens the cupboard.

Before Antony's eyes lay an old man of extraordinary stature, doubled up in a small space: he was on his knees; his head bent closely down, supported against the side planks of the cupboard. His face was not visible, but the leech guessed that the head belonged to an aged person, as the black of his hair was thickly mingled with threads of silver. Not the slightest motion could be perceived in him. With great toil Antony relieved the man or the corpse from his constrained attitude, and with still greater labour lifted him on his bed.

To the pulse!—God be thanked, it beats, though

faintly, faintly, like a feeble echo of life from a distant world. This symptom restores to the physician his skill, his reason, his strength, all that had been on the point of leaving him. The remedies are instantly employed, and Khólmskii opens his eyes. For a long time he could not understand his condition; where he was, what had happened to him. At length, aided by his returning powers and the explanations of the leech, he was able to give an account of his position. Touched by Antony's generous assistance so deeply as to forget that he was a heretic, he thanked him with tears in his eyes.

"The Lord will repay thy kindness," said he: "Ah! if thou wouldst but take our faith," added the voevóda, "I would give thee whichever of my daughters thou wouldst."

It was not till now that Antony could examine his exterior, which was powerfully moulded. The lines of his face were harsh, strongly marked, but at the same time expressive of grandeur and nobleness of soul! Though on what had wellnigh been his death-bed, and menaced by the axe of his powerful sovereign, ready that very moment to descend upon his head—though only just recovering from a first and unexpected blow—he seemed as calm as if, after

a laborious day, he were reposing beneath a hospitable roof. The voevóda's life was saved; his liberty was secured—but for how long? Who could answer for that? It was necessary to find the means either of delivering him entirely from the persecutions of the Great Prince, or of concealing him from them for a time, until the ruler's wrath was overpast. Ehrenstein firmly resolved in his own mind to undertake the task of propitiating Iván Vassílievitch, as well by his own personal influence as by that of the powerful Aristotle. In doing this, the greatest circumspection would be necessary. Obrazétz alone could hope to conceal for a short time so distinguished a fugitive. But how to convey Khólmskii to the boyárin now, in the night-time. Weakened by loss of blood, the voevóda was in no condition to walk without help, and even with assistance, there was no possibility of getting him over the enclosure which divided the boyárin's court-yard from the heretic's quarter. To conduct him round by the street and through the two gates, was not to be thought of. To knock at the door in order to obtain entrance to the boyárin was fraught with danger. Who could be sure of Mamón not having set a watch round the house? But time flies. The se-

cond cocks had proclaimed to the city that midnight was come: it would be impossible to defer the voevóda's removal till morning; for then the physician's servant would appear from the ground-floor, and visitors would present themselves. Nor was it to be thought of again to conceal the voevóda in the cupboard, and again to begin the frightful process, a repetition of which might cost one or the other of them his life.

It was, however, necessary to decide on something or other, and Antony determined to get over to the boyárin's side by any means he could think of: the expedition was not, at least, a distant one, however difficult it might be rendered by the barriers interposed between the two sides. Providing himself, therefore, with his trusty poniard, which he stuck into his girdle, he seized a shestopeór, a kind of mace armed at the end with a number of metal spikes; this was a present from Aristotle, and had been taken in the war against Nóvgórod. In addition to this, Khólmskii gave him a signet-ring—a ring with his family crest, which served as a seal in the attestation of important acts: he carried it always on his finger. On the present occasion this ring was intended to assure Obrazétz that the physician was

really an ambassador from his old friend and companion in arms. With these weapons for war and peace, Antony addressed himself to his expedition, not forgetting to lock his door on the distinguished stranger.

The first attempt he made was upon the fence, which, as we have said, divided the boyárin's court-yard from that of the heretic. Youth and determination will do wonders, and with their assistance he passed this barrier—that is, he clambered over it; not, however, without paying for his attempt by several slight bruises, and the loss of divers fragments of his dress. How his heart beat as he found himself entering the court of the boyárin for the first time, at midnight, like a thief—the dwelling of one who cherished towards him an unmerited abhorrence and hatred. The light of a lamp was trembling in an upper chamber: there lived Anastasia! How near was that treasure, yet how firmly locked from him! He had not, however, much time for these thoughts, for at that moment a huge dog flew at him—his bark rang far around. The combat was short as unequal—the stiletto in his side, a blow of the shestopeór on his skull, and the faithful guardian was silenced for ever. Antony was sorry for the

poor hound, but there was no possibility of dispensing with this victim. Is it not even thus, too, in the world? Do we not often meet with generous but unfortunate people, who, while serving others to obtain their ends, themselves fall victims to those whom they aid?

On went Antony, and reached the great flight of steps. He cautiously rattled the latch of the iron door which led into the hall. No answer. He ventured to touch the door, and it opened. Antony was in the hall. Groping about him for some moments, he hit upon another door; at this also he gives a gentle enquiring knock. Some one answers from within with a cough: the door opens, and—before him is an old man, hoary as a white-headed eagle. The taper held in his hand lights up a face which bears marks of painful anxiety; but as soon as he sees, having screened his eyes with his hand, who it is that stands before him, his face grows dark with terror. It was Obrazétz himself.

Full of disquietude about his friend and companion in arms, he had not been able to sleep; with the idea that the fugitive might yet appear to seek an asylum under his roof, he had commanded his domestics to go to sleep, (in his haste he had for-

gotten to order them to tie up the dog;) but had himself left open the wicket which led into the street, and unlocked the door of the hall. Then he had passed the time, now in praying to the Mother of God, known under the title of "Help in Extremity," (Our Lady of Peril,) now in opening the window to catch the slightest sound that arose through the stillness of the night, then again in coming down to the hall. He had heard the bark of the dog, the rustling of steps on the stone staircase, the knock at the iron door, and he was hastening to meet his friend.

And what! before him stood his terrible guest—was it indeed he, or was it a phantom in his form? What could he want with the boyárin at midnight, when even in the daytime he had never been in that part of the house! . . . . Pale, trembling from head to foot, Obrazétz could hardly raise his arm and make signs of the cross; ejaculating aloud—"May God arise, and may his enemies be scattered!"

"Ay, may God arise, and may his enemies be scattered!" repeated the young man after him.

Let us again mention, that Ehrenstein even yet could not express himself well in Russian; but only so as to make himself understood.

"God is with us!" added he with energy; "and

in proof of this, he hath, even now, vouchsafed me his peculiar favour. Thy friend, the Prince Khólmskii, is in my chamber. He came there by mistake. Dost thou not believe it? Lo! here is his signet-ring."

The boyárin crossed himself as he glanced at the token, and recognized it; but seeing blood on the German's hand, he cried with horror—"Great God! he is not wounded, killed!"

"Calm thyself, this is the blood of thy dog. To work, boyárin; the day is breaking. For the last time I ask thee: wilt thou conceal thy friend in thy house, or leave him with me, in danger?"

"Will I hide him? Assuredly," replied the boyárin, re-assembling his scattered thoughts: "go back instantly by the same path by which thou camest, and I, with my son" . . . . (here he thought for a moment)—"my son will conduct the Prince through the iron door which leadeth from thy quarter to ours."

Not the slightest thanks, not even the merest expression of a good heart appreciating his noble action. To the stern soul of the boyárin it seemed that such gratitude would have overpaid a greater exploit; and besides, in performing it, Antony had broken through the rigid barrier which divided the orthodox from the heretic quarter.

The Prince Khólmskii, of whom report said that he flayed the prisoners taken in war, and slew with his own hands his own soldiers when he caught them pillaging, was sensible of the kindness that had been shown him. He refused to take back his ring, and begged the leech to keep it as a memorial of his generous deed. The signet, as to the metal, was of no great value, and Antony could not refuse.

When Khabár opened the iron door, in order to admit the prince through it into the other quarter, he bowed gracefully to the German, and said a heartfelt—"*I thank thee.* If thou needest rescue, call but Khabár." From this moment he began to cherish a friendly feeling towards the leech. Was it to be wondered at? His generous heart echoed the voice of another heart as generous; besides, youth, open and confiding, easily throws off its prejudices, is less calculating than age. The latter is, as it were, ossified in its opinions; possessed of more experience, but at the same time is more prone to suspicion. Obrazétz would not consent, even then, to see his guest, though Khólmskii eagerly remonstrated against his refusal. To all the arguments of his friend, he answered only by silence. In his mind there were arrayed against the physician the strongest prejudices, cherished by his abhorrence

of every thing foreign—unorthodox—accursed—as he called it—by the holy fathers of the church, and held still more accursed by a heart stern and rendered implacable from the moment when his beloved son had fallen before the arm of a German.

From Anastasia they concealed Antony's generous deed, but she seemed almost instinctively to have guessed the truth; and the next day, when the magician left his chamber, she threw on him from the window a burning glance, which flitted before him like that on a former occasion, and, like that, left a deep impression on his heart. He ventured to bow to her; she nodded, and disappeared. From that moment, when they were sure that no one beheld them, their eyes began to carry on a dialogue, which received an eloquent meaning at one time from the blushes of Anastasia, like the dawning that heralds the tempest; at another from glances dim with love, and then, again, from the paleness which confessed that there was no longer a struggle between her reason and her heart. Antony guarded this treasure like some priceless diamond, which would be torn from him the moment he showed it to another: thus it was only when alone that he could enjoy it, triumph in it, and let his soul bask in its radiance.

In a few days Khólmskii's fate was decided. Obrazétz had recourse to the intercession of the Primate, and other powerful ecclesiastics. This mediation was certain to be successful, the rather that the Prince gave himself up voluntarily into the hands of his sovereign. The intercessors prayed the Great Prince to pardon the voevóda, who had always been a faithful servant to Iván Vassílievitch; had brought to him and all the Christian nation nothing but honour and advantage, and was ready even now to go any where, whithersoever his Lord, and the Lord of All Russia, should command, excepting only against Tver. "Great sin would fall upon thy head, dear Lord, and son of ours," said one ecclesiastic, "if the voevóda should spill the blood of his countrymen." On their side, Aristotle and the court physician skilfully explained to the Tsar, that the report of his unmerited severity towards the illustrious voevóda, might injure him in the good opinion entertained of him by the Roman Cæsar and other potentates; that by rigour to the voevóda, the Great Prince would give his other subjects an inducement to become traitors to their country; that Khólmskii ought not to be punished, but rather rewarded, for his generous refusal, and that this reward would

stimulate others to imitate so noble a patriotism. Above all, Aristotle proved to him how easily, without the assistance of the voevóda, he might reduce Tver to submission; and how glorious it would be for Iván Vassílievitch, without exposing himself to danger, to complete, in person, a conquest so skilfully prepared by his wise and dexterous policy. "Let the glory of this great exploit belong to thee alone," added Aristotle.

Iván was not a great warrior. When it became a question of actual hostilities, he preferred to keep out of the way—he was pleased with laurels gathered by the hands of others; but no one can refuse him credit for skill in the difficult art of preparing for war, selecting the most favourable moment for it, and obtaining from it the greatest advantage: and these qualities are, at least, as rare and as precious as personal courage, and as worthy of respect as the fame of a distinguished general. On the present occasion, Iván, relying on the powerful aid of his partisans, who had promised to open the gates of the city the moment he appeared before it, confided in the strength and valour of the troops of Moscow, and in the skill of his engineer, who was so dexterous in the management of cannon. He was assured that he

would not risk his safety in the reduction of the principality of Tver. In this confidence he proclaimed, that as soon as the floods subsided, he would in person, accompanied by his son, lead his troops against the rebellious Prince, who had insulted the sanctity of treaties and the ties of kindred. At the same time he pardoned Khólmskii. This act of mercy, however, was not unaccompanied by conditions advantageous to himself: knowing how necessary the voevóda would be to him in future, and fearing that, at the first disagreement, he might take it into his head to fly into Lithuania—where all enemies and traitors to the Prince of Moscow found a refuge, in the same way as Moscow was the asylum of all rebels and traitors to Lithuania—he demanded a signed engagement from him. On the same day, eight similar engagements, or signed deeds, some under a penalty of two hundred and fifty roubles, some even higher, amounting in all to two thousand roubles, were given by the principal inhabitants of Moscow, chiefly the boyárins, promising to pay the Great Prince these sums, in the event of the voevóda flying or departing into a foreign country. With this valuation of the distinguished voevóda at two thousand roubles, Iván Vassílievitch was content: be-

sides this, the Prince Khólmskii *kissed the cross;* that "*evil* against his lord he would *desire none.*" And his suzerain, the Great Prince, "had mercy upon his servant, and forgave him his unbuxomness."

This affair was henceforward buried in complete oblivion. In course of time the Great Prince gave his daughter in marriage to Khólmskii's son. Thus, at this epoch, went hand in hand extraordinary severity, accompanied by chains and death; and extraordinary favour, conducting the lately-doomed culprit into the family of the Tsar.*

* Khólmskii's son, in the reign of Vassílii Ivánovitch, was sent to Báylo-ózero, and died there in exile. His only crime was this very marriage with the daughter of Iván III.—*Note of the Author.*

CHAPTER IV.

THE LAST OF HIS RACE.

"If thy son be a sot, wealth helpeth him not."

Proverb.

——"Hark! a noise. Is it the Tsar?
——No, 'tis the fool."

PÓUSHKIN—*Bóris Godounóff.*

WHAT a tremendous, what an impassable barrier was that which divided the family of Obrazétz from the stranger! But the brave and generous Khabár had once looked through that barrier; and now a second time knocked for admittance at the door and heart of Antony. The visit was in the evening: it was a time for stealth, you will say; and you will guess the truth. Khabár came, unperceived by the domestics, (God help him, if his father should hear of it!) to consult the leech about a sick person. He was now sure—convinced—that Antony could perform wonders; this he had been told by the beautiful woman to whom he was conducting him.

At any time the leech would have hastened at the call of a sufferer, and yet more willingly at Moscow; where as yet, with the exception of the parrot and Insatiate, he had not had a single patient under his hands, and where he wished so eagerly to acquire by his skill the Russians' confidence and love. And now, above all, with what delight would he not fly to the aid of a sick fellow-creature, when it is Anastasia's brother that calls him! Anastasia's brother! how much music in those words! On his face there was an expression that belonged to her; some family resemblance, some trait of her physiognomy—of that face which was painted on his soul; a trait not quite faithful, yet recalling the original. He came to Antony with a secret request, in all the confidence of friendship: who could have promised this two days ago? The young leech himself could hardly believe the visit, and in his delight knew not how to show enough consideration for his guest of the moment: or how he could prove to him that he was not that terrible German sorcerer that they had represented him in Moscow. One slight appeal to his benevolent heart, and he was ready to respond to this mark of confidence with any sacrifice: this he had very clearly shown by his aid of the Prince Khólmskii. Having set out for Muscovy with so

loving a soul, with such flattering dreams of living in a new country, he could not but feel, on his arrival, the full weight and bitterness of his solitude in a strange land, and the injustice of the people: and all of a sudden Heaven vouchsafes him the kind glance of a lovely maiden, the gratitude of a distinguished leader whose benefactor he had been permitted to become, and now sends him a friendly confidence.

Generous Antony! he had already forgotten all the ill-will and hatred of the Russians; and he was happy.

They go: over the sky are strewn myriads of stars streaming forth their twinkling rays; but these stars burn not for us—they have their own worlds which they warm and illumine. On this evening the lamp of our earth was not lighted; Antony followed his guide in darkness, not knowing whither he was leading him. All he knew was, that they had not quitted the city, and that they were traversing narrow winding streets; by their being every moment in danger of running against the corners of houses. They could scarcely distinguish objects; but suddenly they found themselves surrounded on all sides by a multitude of bright lights, by the beams of which pious men and women seemed to be assem-

bling for evening prayer, or for the guard of the Tsar's palace. The air was impregnated with fragrant incense; in reality, Antony and his guide were at the Great Prince's palace, which was encircled by churches and chapels, lighted up by religious zeal. Then again all was dark.

"Be cautious," said Khabár, in an almost inaudible whisper, taking the leech by the hand in order to lead him through a narrow passage between the houses; "caution, caution, Master Leech! here a word may bring danger on us!"

Soon the wind blew freshly upon them: this sign informed Antony that they had left the enclosure of the houses, and that they were ascending an eminence. By the stars, reflected in patches of water as in polished steel, and by the sound of mill-wheels, Antony concluded that he was on the hill above the pool of Neglínnaia; on which there still remained patches of belated ice. His memory was instantly recalled to the pugilistic battle on the pool; and thence, by the process of mental association, to the crimson veil which had been hung out from the tower.—"That turret cannot be far off!" he thought.

His companion stopped him.

"Here!" said Khabár; and just as he was entering a wicket, he felt some one seize him firmly round the legs.

"I will not let thee!" exclaimed a stifled female voice, expressive of despair. "I will not let thee —thou shalt trample me to death first! When thou comest in, villain, thou shalt not find thy Greek alive."

Instead of answer nothing was heard but a violent blow.

"Kill me, but I will not let thee pass!" again cried the voice of despair.

"Scream louder, and I will kill thee!" said Khabár.

A light from a window illuminated imperfectly and for a moment a young and pretty woman, without kerchief or veil, (which were lying at a short distance from her on the ground,) and with her hair all dishevelled. She had twined her arms round Khabár's legs, and under a hail-storm of blows was kissing his knees, perhaps endeavouring, by gluing her lips to him, to stifle the screams of pain.

'Twas Selínova. She desired not to destroy her lover, but only to draw him away ftom her dangerous rival; and at what a moment! when the aid of

a physician was indispensable to that rival. The moment for safety might pass, and the victory would be on her side. Terror, indignation, despair, were mingled in Khabár's countenance: for him, too, the decisive moment had arrived. It was necessary to triumph, cost what it might; or to destroy her for whose sake he had sacrificed Selínova—her who apparently was so dear to him. That beloved one —so far dearer than all, so precious—was dying, was awaiting his help, there—in the house—to which his entrance was barred by the frightful jealousy of a woman! He made an effort to drag Selínova from his legs, as you tear the ivy that for years has entwined its tendrils round a mighty oak; he threw her on his shoulders, and telling Antony to enter the house through the open wicket, bore off his spoil.

And the leech, under the burden of strange and painful impressions, entered the court and ascended a flight of steps. The staircase was lighted with lamps, a rich oriental carpet was spread along it. Antony passed into a hall, and thence into an antechamber. There seemed to be an unusual bustle in the house: alarm was painted in the faces of all. In the confusion they hardly seemed to remark the

physician. The servants were not Russian; in some unknown language they asked him what he wanted; he spoke to them in Russian—in German—'twas all the same: in Italian—they understood him. "Signor Antonio, the signor leech!" resounded through the house. With eagerness they conducted him to a small chamber, richly decorated in the oriental taste.

On a bed was stretched a young woman, whose beauty was triumphant even over disease. The dim eyes gave forth a phosphoric brightness; the lips were parched. Two long black tresses streamed over her snowy shoulders, and upon her heaving bosom, like two black serpents that have been crushed by a bold step. Above her, before an image of Greek painting, adorned with precious stones, burned a lamp made of an entire shell of nacre. At sight of a young and handsome physician, the patient, notwithstanding her sufferings, endeavoured to arrange her dress, and to banish from her countenance and attitude all that was disagreeable, produced by her torturing disorder.—"If there is yet time, restore me to life, Signor Leech; I am so young, I would yet live on a little longer," she said in the Italian language, which sounded doubly sweet from her lips;

and instantly she gave him her hand. Drawing him towards her, she added, in a whisper, at his ear—"They have given me poison: I feel it; but, for God's sake, speak of it to no one."

Beside the bed was a man of more than forty; bald, short, feeble, with crooked, goat-like legs. He was evidently the master of the house, as the attendants, who stood around distracted with sorrow, seemed to pay respect to him. His eyes were red and swollen with weeping: instead of being active and giving help, he wept and whined like an old woman.—"Save her!" he implored the leech in a pitiful voice, and in bad Italian; "if I still had my empire, I would give it to save Haidée's life. Now I will reward thee in a manner befitting the Despot of the Morea."

Who would have guessed it? This man, stamped with imbecility physical and intellectual—this whiner was the last scion of the Emperors of Byzantium—Andreas Palæologos.

And this was all that was left of the greatness of the Roman empire!

His father, Thomas, brother of the last of the Constantines, with one son—this Andreas—and his daughter Sophia, Princess of Servia, had sought

refuge from the victorious sword of the Ottomans, first at Corfu, and afterwards in Italy. The other son preferred to remain at Constantinople—as our countrymen the Russians said at the time, *eating the bread* of the infidel emperor—and found no reason to repent: he enjoyed existence, comfort, and tranquillity under the protection of the generous sultan. The exiled Thomas carried to Rome the head of the apostle Andrew, his right to the Byzantine throne, and his misfortunes: the precious relic was accepted by the Pontiff, who promised, aided by the Duke of Milan, to restore him to his lost crown. These promises were never fulfilled, and he died an exile at Durazzo, leaving for his monument a few lines in the Italian chronicles, where he is recorded to have served in some magnificent ceremony or other, as a no less magnificent *uffiziante*. Desiring to find in the East an opponent to the infidel conqueror of the city of Constantine, and to draw Russia within the shadow of his tiara, the Pope, Paul II., betrothed the daughter of Thomas to the Russian Great Prince. Iván deceived the Roman Pontiff in his calculations. The arrival in Moscow of Andreas, whether from a simple desire of visiting his sister, or a foolish hope of flattering his brother-in-law with

his right to Byzantium, but served to prove to him that those rights only are real which can be maintained by intellect, power, and money. Iván Vassílievitch was not the man to be dazzled by such tinsel: he immediately guessed the Greek's true value, and foreseeing that he would be a burden on him, treated him with no great distinction. The amity of the Sultan, though that of an accursed and unbelieving infidel, founded as it was on arms, had much greater attractions for his eye. To him the Pope, the Jew Khózi, Stephen of Moldavia, Batórii of Hungary, the Tartar Khan—were all equally attractive, when he had need of them.

We have said that Andreas Palæologos, immersed in tears, was standing by the bed-side of a beautiful and suffering woman: but we have not said who this woman was—poisoned by some wicked hand, which in all probability had been guided by the jealousy of a rival. She was his mistress; a year before she had been sold, against her will, by the avarice of her own mother. Fortunately for her, the poison was in itself feeble, or weakened by terror or conscience, and no time had been lost. The power of the remedies employed by Antony was victorious over the action of the venom. Haidée was saved.

This lovely being, but a moment ago so near annihilation, bloomed once more like a bright and living rose. In her lip, her cheek, the fresh blood again began to course from its secret fountain. With both her hands—hands so exquisitely modelled—she seized that of the young physician, pressed it to her bosom, and raising to heaven her dark liquid eyes, which streamed with tears, thanked him more eloquently than with words.

At such an unusual expression of gratitude Antony was confused, and blushed deeply . . . . Incoherently, almost unintelligibly, he expressed his delight at having restored life to so beautiful a being. Recollecting Anastasia's brother, he no longer wondered how the Greek was preferred to Selínova.

The Despot of the Morea, in the fulness of his delight, kept sneaking round the bed, like the learned cat at the end of its chain; and suddenly, at the first glance thrown on him in pity, began to mumble the little hand that was extended to him by Haidée, unwillingly, nay, almost contemptuously.—"Now, come down to my companions, to my friends," he cried, snapping his fingers, and drawing Antony after him; "we will make festival on the recovery

of our queen. If I could, I would make the whole world rejoice with us."

The physician unwillingly followed him, rewarded with a farewell look, a flattering glance, such as women, confident in their beauty, so well know how to give. They had hardly reached the threshold of the chamber, when the musical voice of Haidée sounded in the ear of Palæologos. He rushed to her on his tottering little legs.—"Dost thou hear; this is for him, for my preserver!" she cried in an imperious tone, giving Palæologos a gold chain of great price.

"That is a good girl!" he answered; "I meant .... but I knew not what to give .... I was thinking about it. Now, one more farewell kiss on the little hand, or at least on the little finger."

"No, they are waiting for thee—begone!" said Haidée; and the Despot—despot only in name—hurried to perform the will of his mistress.

Antony thought of his poor mother, and accepted the royal present. He had already received a rich necklace from the Great Princess Sophia Phomínishna for the cure of the parrot; sables and marten skins from the Great Prince—all was for her, his dear, his tenderly-loved mother. How exultingly

she would deck herself in them, and show herself to her acquaintance!—"All this my good Antony sent me!" she would say, with a mother's pride.

As soon as Haidée was sure that Palæologos was gone, she ordered all her women to leave her, and then called one of them back.—"Thou gavest me just now some drink," she said, and shaking her head reproachfully, "what had I done to thee?"

The woman turned as pale as death; sobbing, she fell at her mistress's feet, and confessed all. Selínova had bribed her; the poison had been given, but terror or conscience had diminished the quantity.

"Let this remain between God and ourselves," said Haidée, giving her her hand; "pray to the Father of us all to pardon thee, as I do. Shall his sinful servant dare to judge another sinner? . . . . But . . . . they come; arise, lest they find thee in this attitude" . . . .

And what had passed remained for ever a secret between these two women, the leech, and God.

Khabár appeared. The love and devotion of the servants—men and women—to their mistress, opened the doors to him at all hours of the day or night, removed for him the vigilance of the guards—these feelings were sentinels when he visited her in

secret. His face was clouded. It instantly cleared up, however, at the first look that Haidée gave him. "Here! to my heart, my precious one—my treasure!" she cried, as she pressed the youth's dark curls to her bosom; "but for thee I had died—'twas thou who sent me a leech."

"Assuredly 'twas I: who else? I would go to the pit of hell—God forgive me!—for thee, my darling, my little pearl!"

"*Now* wilt thou call the leech a cursed heretic—a witch?"

"O! I now am ready to call him brother. What—tell me, hide nothing from me—what ailed thee, my little dove? Was it not poison now?"

"Yes, 'twas poison . . . . but from no hand but mine own . . . . I myself, like a little fool, am alone to blame. I wished to save a silver ladle, and took a copper one. In the dark I observed not that it was covered with rust, and I ladled some drink with it. A little more, the leech said, and my eyes would have closed for ever. God knoweth I should not regret life; I should regret thee alone! Thou wouldst have wept awhile over my cold grave, and forgot the Greek girl Haidée."

"No! I would not have wearied mine eyes with

tears: I would have covered them with yellow sand: I would have espoused another, an eternal mistress; and made my marriage-bed on the coffin plank."

The tender and passionate Haidée kissed him with a southern kiss. Thus the parched earth, in scorching day, drinks eagerly the dew of heaven!

"Hush!" cried Khabár, raising his head like a steed at the sound of the war-trumpet. "There is a noise below. I will go."

"Let them feast! My poor king, as they call him, is now mad with drinking. But thou, my true king, my lord, grant a few moments to thy slave!"

"Feasting . . . . and I not there! . . . . I cannot . . . . Farewell, my dove! The dark nights are ours."

"Thy pleasure is mine. Go."

And Khabár rushed from her embrace—from one banquet to another.

In the mean time the leech had been introduced into a motley society, which was impatiently awaiting Palæologos in a large long chamber. There were mingled Russians, Greeks, Italians, architects,

and masons, workers in silver and copper, boyárins with the *vitch* * and without the *vitch*, guards, the deacon Borodátii, the interpreter Bartholoméw; there were also members of the higher and lower orders and ranks which Iván Vassílievitch had created and classed according to dignity: but now all were levelled in the bacchanalian orgie. Their impatience proceeded, not from any desire to enjoy the presence of the mighty despot of the Morea, and pretender to the Byzantine throne, but rather from their thirst for foreign wines, with which he usually regaled his guests. In his absence, the huge goblets, yawning on their sides, the silver-chased cups and flagons, with a melancholy thirsty air, and the ladles —that looked as if they had turned on their faces for very shame—were scattered pell-mell on an oaken table, now left alone and deserted, like some ruined spendthrift, who can no longer feast his friends with splendid banquets. By the number of capacious vessels heaped in picturesque disorder, by the abundant splashes of wine upon the table, the stupified looks and red noses of the guests, it was

* All boyárins were not entitled to be addressed by the respectacle termination *vitch* subjoined to their patronymic.—T. B. S.

very easy to see that Bacchus had not been asleep, and that his cupbearers had done their office with zealous activity. The benches had suffered most of all: they stood in a position, inducing one to think that the revellers had been making use of them to demonstrate extraordinary problems in military tactics: the covers of the forms were in one place pulled off and streaming down like a cascade, or an outspread wing; in another, unmercifully rumpled, they served as a pillow to a guest who was sleeping on the floor. Teniers would have found here an abundant harvest for his pencil. One of the guests, in spite of the fumes of the wine that were whirling in his brain, and remembering that he was in the house of the pretender to the Byzantine throne, was endeavouring with all his might to put the bridle of ceremony on lips, hands, feet—all that might forget itself in the dwelling of so illustrious a personage. Another was sneaking round the deserted table, and wistfully peering now into this, now into that empty flagon. A third was bestriding a bench as if it were a steed. There were some, too, so outrageous, as to lie down on the floor, and trumpet forth a snoring concerto to the honour of the despot of the Morea. But the moment Andreas Palæologos arrived, all

was awake and in motion—one of his own accord, as if by some magnetic sympathy, another by a jog from his neighbour—and instantly formed around their entertainer an inquisitive and varied group. Each spoke as well as he could, and in what language he was able, and each tried to anticipate the other in his eager enquiries; and the whole formed a gabbling enough to raise the dead. At last could be distinguished the words—"Can we congratulate you on the signora's recovery?"

"Lord Despot, how fareth it with thy dove, Haidá Andréevna?"

Here the Russian was anticipated by a foreigner.

But the Russian had shown no small cleverness in choosing his term: who could tell the name of Haidée's father! The Despot is her father, brother, friend—all, all. What could be better than Andréevna? Let any body try to invent a better title! You "can see with half an eye that he knows what he is about," as the prefect's wife would say in Gogol's novel.

"Saved—saved—she is saved!" cried the Despot of the Morea: "and here is her preserver," he added, pointing to Antony.

"What disease had the lady?"

"She ate something unwholesome," (here he clapped his hand on his stomach, and made a wry face as if he had just swallowed something very sour;) "but now . . . . all is over . . . . all is well, my lads! Now for a carouse in Byzantine fashion—to the leech's health! Cupbearer, the best Italian wine."

At this exclamation the goblets were all in motion. Cups and flagons waved and clanked in the hands of the revellers.

The Russian guests crossed themselves.

"To the health of Antony the Almayne!" shouted a number of voices in Russian.

"Blessings be on him 'in the dew of heaven, and in the fatness of the earth!'" added the deacon Borodátii.

"To the health of our Antonio! he is ours by education, he is our countryman!" roared the Italians.

"It was our Greek that brought him hither! He hath saved the rose of our imperial garden—he is no stranger with us either," chorused the Greeks.

"We do foul sin, Matvéi Sidórovitch!" whispered a boyárin without the *vitch* to his comrade with the *vitch*; "the wine sticketh in my throat

like glue. What! to the health of a foul heretic —a necromancer! . . . . If he were at least an Italian" . . . .

"'Twas even so with me, Simeón. My hand will not raise the goblet to my lips! I might as well try to lift, God knoweth what. But see! our neighbour here hath grown thoughtful too" . . . .

The neighbour tremblingly pointed to his cup, which was full to the brim.

"Look there! see'st thou not something lolling out its tongue at us!"

And each man, seeing his own ugly face reflected in the wine, his staring hair, thought he beheld the devil with his horns.

"Have ye quaffed all out?" asked the Despot.

"All, all!" roared the guests; "without leaving a drop."

"Here is a proof . . . . full proof . . . . drunk out" . . . . repeated the boyárin with the *vitch* and his comrades, concealing their cups behind their outspread palms.

When it became Antony's turn to thank the company, by emptying in their honour an enormous measure, which would have laid him straightway under the table, as he was unaccustomed to the juice of the vine, he merely touched the goblet with his lips.

His excuse was the obligation of his profession, which might call him to his duty at any hour of day or night, and the weak state of his health—"A leech is as a priest; both make a vow to serve God, in devoting themselves to the service of humanity. Each must present himself at the altar pure and undefiled. —If, by my presence, I disturb your pleasure, I am ready to depart."

"No, no! we desire it not. Thou art our most welcome guest!" cried Palæologos. "See how we carouse with our friends! Wine! haste! wine! more wine! . . . . Or doth the Byzantine Emperor lack?" . . . .

At this moment the interpreter Bartholomew, swaying from side to side like a pendulum, reeled up to Antony's side—the leech saw him not—then he reeled to the other side—with no better success. At last he stopped close to him, and whispered at his ear till the young man could not help starting.

"Thou here!"

"Of course, most high worshipful sir . . . . I informed you, methinks, that I am quite one of the family—quite at home. Hm! said I well? What a glorious noble fellow is the heir of Constantine the Great!"

"In what, except gloriously draining the cups?

In this too, methinks, his 'star is beginning to grow dim.'"

"Softly, softly, most worshipful: you kill one to say so . . . . But did you see the pretty creature? What! did I lie?"

"For once you spoke the truth."

"If you . . . . only give me a hint . . . . I will take care . . . . trust to me!"

And the interpreter, with an air of stupid cunning, winked his eye.

"Thou doest me too much honour. Add this garland to the hundreds that have been showered on you from the Rhine to the Moskvá."

And Antony, leaving the interpreter sticking in the mud, hastened to the architects with whom he had travelled from Germany.

At the highest uproar of the revel, Khabár made his appearance. Having found out that many were ill-disposed towards the leech on account of his refusal to drink—"I will answer for him and for myself!" he cried; and before him they placed a measure, into which was poured twice the number of flagons that had been drunk by any one of the company in his absence.

"That is the way we bathe in wine—in Byzan-

tine fashion!" cried Andreas Palæologos. His little legs were twisted across each other like wet threads; his lower jaw, which at all times projected, now hung down, so that his profile, with all its sharp angles indicative of silliness, was reflected on the wall in the most ludicrous manner.

"That is our way—in Russian fashion!" said Khabár, draining the gigantic measure.

Drink develops the real character more readily than any thing else. It is not at the bottom of a well, but at the bottom of a glass, that we should seek for truth. Audacity glittered in the eyes of Khabár; while the Despot of the Morea showed the effects of wine by boasting. Both occupied the chief position on the scene of revel.

"What are we doing?" said Khabár; "we have drunk to the health of the Great Prince and our noble host; but we have not honoured his noble brother, Manuel Phomítch, who is keeping for him the city of the Constantines!"

Befogged as were the brains of Phomítch, he, nevertheless, at least comprehended the gibe, and proclaimed that his brother, in consequence of his flight to the Sultan, had been deprived of all right to the Byzantine throne. The toast was refused.

"O, my brethren, grievous is the burden of empire!" said the Despot mournfully; yet drawing himself up—"I myself have renounced it. To be sure, the empire of Byzantium is not like your principality of Moscow. How many seas and rivers doth it contain? How many great cities? Its smallest town is greater than Moscow. I will not say a horseman—even a bird could not in a whole year fly over *our* empire. But your little nook of a country —'tis a mere handful."

"Our land is also in the palm of God, and in the hand of our great lord Iván Vassílievitch, and that hand reacheth far!" exclaimed proudly the deacon Borodátii, drawing himself up, and stroking his beard. Triumph and delight gleamed in the eyes of the tiny Titus Livius of the Great Prince.

"Thanks, thanks!" cried Khabár—"thou hast helped me out. Never didst thou speak so sweetly and so well. Let us kiss, and drink to the honour and glory of old Russia . . . . Add, beside, that our holy mother Russia is growing up, not by years but by hours; while Byzantium hath been growing less, ever less and less, till she is all reduced to the great lord, Despot of Morea, Andréi Phomítch."

"And how would your Princeling of Moscow,

my ungrateful brother-in-law—how would he have appeared in the world but for the children of Phomá?"

Khabár, with some of the guards, burst into a loud laugh. Around the scene of the dispute a circle began to form. Antony looked with pleasure upon this contest, in which were actors on one side, noble patriotism and loyalty; on the other, boasting weakness. Who but would have wished for the victory to fall to the former: who but would have answered for its doing so?

"Ay, it was but since my sister Sophia Phomínishna appeared in Russia, that your nation hath been heard of in the world. The Tartars were driven away; Nóvgorod fell, and Moscow began to look something like a town. It is only since then that Iván Vassílievitch came to be thought something of."

"Oh!" burst from the gallant breast of Khabár. He seemed as if he could have devoured the Byzantine boaster with his eyes.

A boyárin, with a thick white beard, appeared on the scene, and said, bowing low—"We honour and reverence thy mistress and ours, the Great Princess Sophia Phomínishna; for that she loved Russia

better than her native country, (if it is worth speaking of that miserable country, eaten up as it is by an unbelieving heretic instead of a Tartar locust;) but it is not noble in thee, Lord Despot of Morea, behind the back of our sovereign, Iván Vassílievitch, to bar" . . . . . (the boyárin stopped and shook his head) . . . . "nor would it be noble in me, in return for thy favours, my lord, to speak an evil word."

"Your sovereign, my ungrateful brother-in-law, himself slighteth me—counteth me worse than a refuse marten skin. He gave my daughter to the Prince of Veréia; and now, for some woman's baubles, hath driven him to Lithuania. I thank him. What honour have I at the Great Prince's court? In what respect am I held? What gifts have I from him? I am worse off than the Tartar Tsarévitch, Danyár."

"The Tartar Tsarévitch's grandfather, father, and he himself, have done much Christian service," said the boyárin, again bowing: "let each be rewarded according to his service."

"And I . . . . . I . . . . . fools that ye are!"

The boyárin bowed still lower, and scratched his head.

"Know ye not that I carry in my pocket the Byzantine empire?"

"'Tis not over large," interrupted Khabár, "if it can find room in thy pocket. I could stow away half a dozen of thy empires in my pouch."

This reply was received with a general burst of laughter by the younger part of the Russians, and by many of the foreigners who understood the Russian language. Some one among them, as if by accident, jostled the Despot of the Morea; another, behind, made as if he was going to fillip him on his bald pate. The Greeks mournfully shook their heads. The boyárin, with the bushy white beard, preserved a cold haughty air.

"I would have . . . . . I offered this Iván of yours my Byzantine empire!"

"The crane to heaven is flying," sang Khabár.

"Interrupt me not, whelp!" screamed the pretender, stamping his little foot imperiously: "Know'st thou? One word to my sister, and thou art in chains!"

Khabár took fire, and arose in his whole majestic height from the bench on which he had hitherto been sitting before the Despot; he turned up the right sleeve of his kaftán, and, placing his left hand on his waist, twisted the thumb in his glittering girdle.

The pretender, delighted with his own courage,

perhaps the first he ever exhibited, continued, swelling and heating himself more and more—"Iván did not honour me as it became him to honour me, an Emperor and his own brother-in-law; so I have given all his rights to *my* Byzantine empire to the Spanish king, Ferdinand, and Queen Isabella."

"Thou hast forgot, Lord Despot," said one of the Greeks respectfully, "that thou previously gavest these rights to the French king, Charles VIII.—that on that occasion he clothed himself in the purple of the Constantines, and triumphantly styled himself August."

"Ay," contemptuously cried Andreas Palæologos, "he offended me; so I was wroth with him, and gave them to another. He is just such a felon as the Russian Iván" . . . . .

"Thou liest!" shouted Khabár, and instantly gave a slap on the face to the heir of Constantine the Great and Augustus.

"Well done!" cried Antony; "he who knoweth not how to make others respect him, is unworthy of respect."

And he threw the gold chain, the gift of the Despot, at the giver's feet. It was become a burden to the generous young man.

"Right well!" echoed some voices; "in the name of all Russia we thank thee, Iván Vassílievitch Khabár!"

"Oh, oh!" whined the Despot, holding his cheek: "Greeks, my Greeks! take my part ..... Your sovereign hath been insulted ..... humiliation!"

All was uproar. One man snatched up his cap and rushed out; another sneaked off without his bonnet. The vigorous buffet resounded in the ear of the feasters, and sobered many of them. A few of the domestics who composed the Despot's court, crowded up to seize Khabár; but stopped short, alarmed by his stern immovable attitude, or by the cries of the Russians, that they would not leave a stick of the house standing, if so much as a hand was laid upon their comrade. Perhaps the attendants obeyed Haidée's commands in sparing her lover. It finished by the Despot's going, in the hope of redress from the Great Princess, to complain to his mistress; and the hall, a few moments ago so gay and noisy, became empty and still. The last who quitted it were Khabár and his father's guest.

At the gate some one stopped Khabár. It was the Greek girl. She came not to reproach him, (how could her heart do that?) but to bid him farewell—

perhaps for long—perhaps she was never to see him more. How will they report this adventure to Iván Vassílievitch; in what humour will it find the terrible ruler?

CHAPTER V.

DECISION WITHOUT APPEAL.

By a covered passage leading from the Great Prince's palace to the Church of the Annunciation, which was constructed at this period of wood, Iván Vassílievitch was returning from morning prayer. When he left the church his face was cheerful, and bore the calm expression left on it by his recent devotions; but the further he advanced, the gloomier and more wrathful grew his brow, and the brighter gleamed displeasure in his glance. Behind him, plunged in mournful thought, walked a tall handsome youth; this was his son Iván.

They were followed by the boyárin Mamón. Neither of the latter dared to interrupt the gloomy silence of the Great Prince; Iván the Young endeavoured to hush even the sound of his footsteps, so as not to offend his father's ears, at a moment when

the slightest imprudent movement might give a fatal direction to the explosion of his displeasure: he knew that that displeasure, if not exasperated by the compliance or the selfishness of those around him, might yet sink back to rest, or at least not lead to fatal consequences. And therefore he took care not to destroy this chance; like a skilful engineer, who gives free passage to the flood swelled by storms, lest it destroy his dam. On the boyárin's face was playing, now the delight of successful villany, and then terror; with eyes and ears he greedily followed every movement of his sovereign. Their silence resembled the stillness which prevails as the fatal lots are being drawn from the urn;—the lot was drawn. Iván Vassílievitch stopped in the middle of the passage, and turning to his son, said, "Hast thou heard, Iván, what thy favourite Khabár hath done?"

"I have heard, my lord;" replied Iván the Young calmly.

"'Tis naught, then, thou think'st, to strike the Despot of the Morea!"

"But wherefore? have they told thee that, father?"

"Neither why nor wherefore: he was assuredly

drunk. It is thanks to thee that he hath worn his head to this day."

"If he wears that head from henceforward, it will be for thy good, my lord, and that of our faithful Russia," replied Iván the Young, with composure; "if he lay his head on the block for this matter, I would kiss that head."

"How so?"

The Great Prince looked sternly at Mamón; the latter struggled with all his might to hide his confusion, and meet his ruler's eye with calmness.

"Behold how the fact was," replied Iván the Young, with the countenance of truth. "Yester evening, at a feast in the palace of Andréi Phomítch, there were assembled, as if in insult, boyárins and rabble, old and young, to revel: when drunk, he made friends and fellows with all, drank to the health of a vile Greek harlot, and embraced a shoemaker who maketh her shoes. Thou knowest how he dishonoureth, by his debauches, his race, and bringeth shame on my mother, Sophia Phomínishna. In the full tide of drunkenness he began to speak evil of the Russian land, saying that it stands only through the Greeks, and that all its power and honour ariseth from the Greeks; that but for them,

we should never have driven out the Tartars, nor taken Nóvgorod, nor built and extended Moscow: he barked, too, somewhat as if thou, my lord, did'st not feel his favour, and but scantly honoured him, and that therefore he had given his right to his Byzantine empire, not to thee, but to the Spanish king" . . . . .

"Ha, dog! . . . . What! when even his kennel is given him out of charity, and doth he give empires? One brother playeth the buffoon for the infidel Tsar, and licketh the trenchers in his kitchen; the other sneaketh about from corner to corner, and selleth castles in the clouds to any one who is fool enough to buy them. . . . . Well, what followed?"

"I dare not speak how he bayed at thee."

"Speak! I command thee."

"He said, that he had not given thee Constantinople, because thou wert . . . . I cannot, father; my tongue will not utter it" . . . .

"Iván, dost thou know me?"

This question would have produced an answer even from the dead.

"He called thee 'hound,' 'accursed dog;' and Khabár thereupon lent him a buffet."

"What! and he did not throttle him!" cried the Great Prince, unable to utter another word. His eyes gleamed fiercely, the breath seemed stifled in his bosom. Calming himself a little, he said—"And was it so in truth?"

"Ask the deacon Borodátii, the oldest and most trustworthy of the boyárins who were at the feast—ask the court leech, Antony."

Iván Vassílievitch grew thoughtful.

"No, it needs not. Thou say'st it, Iván; shall I ask boyárins and deacons?"

The Great Prince fondly loved his son, and was confident in his prudence and honesty.

"What hast thou been telling me?" he cried, turning to Mamón, and striking him with his staff a violent blow on the face.

Mamón felt that his life hung on a hair, and replied with steadiness—"It is in thy power, my lord, to execute me; but I relate what I heard: I myself was not at the banquet."

"And that in future thou mayest more carefully inform thyself, thou shalt pay Simskoi-Khabár a hundred roubles for slandering him; thou shalt carry it thyself, and shalt bow thrice at his feet. Dost thou hear?" . . . .

"Iván," he added, "give order, that from this day forth they call him in every act Khabár. It is *profitable* to the Russian Tsar to have such brave men. Thou dost well to favour him."

"And how came the leech Antony at the revel?" enquired the Great Prince of his son when Mamón had departed.

"Andréi Phomítch's Greek concubine had fallen sick. They called the leech in; and when he had relieved her, they brought him against his will to the feast. He refused to drink: they say the despot gave him a gold chain for curing the Greek, but when he spake evil of thee, the leech threw him back his gift: and the chain was a rich one."

'Twas evident by the sparkling of the Great Prince's eyes, that this news was agreeable to him. Nevertheless, he said—"'Twas not wise, if the gaud was rich."

Thus was decided the fate of Khabár. An hour earlier, it would have been impossible to answer for his life. Mamón was certain of the success of his accusation, having the gravity of the offence in his favour, and the protection, too, of Sophia. Although the Great Princess did not love her brother, as well on account of the weakness of his character as of

the profligacy so shamefully exhibited on this occasion, she nevertheless felt lively and heartfelt indignation at the unheard-of insult which had been offered to him. But Iván Vassílievitch had decided, and no ties on earth could alter his determination. Powerless against that decision, Sophia felt displeasure against Khabár, and from this moment began to cherish a feeling of enmity towards the physician. We must add, that between her and the wife of Iván the Young, there had arisen a kind of jealous rivalry; and therefore this success obtained by the young prince touched her to the quick. To her brother, after the Great Prince's decision, nothing remained but to quit Russia.

How happened it that Iván the Young played the intercessor? Boldness even here befriended Khabár. With the first dawn of morning he had presented himself to him, and related all that had occurred at the despot's banquet. He summoned, in confirmation of his words, the tiny deacon, the boyárin who had answered Andréi Phomítch, two of the guard, and the leech Antony. All confirmed the truth. We have seen that the noble, straightforward character of the heir to the Russian throne, enabled him to profit by the information of his favourite and

the witnesses to whom he appealed, and to give a powerful protection to truth and to a noble exploit.

It was not without some agitation that Khabár and Antony the leech awaited, each in his own dwelling, the catastrophe of this adventure: the one, though he did not repent of what he had done, and would have repeated it had the same occasion presented itself, though ready fearlessly to submit to a capital punishment, yet feared the shame which such a punishment would cast upon his aged father and his maiden sister. Antony was uneasy for him on the same grounds: he had begun to take a lively interest in him, he sympathized with the motives of his bold deed—coarse, it is true, yet at the same time attractive from the nobleness which originated it. He was inclined to excuse the very weaknesses of Khabár. In his desire to obtain the good-will of the Russians, Antony, at the feast of yesterday, had endeavoured to unite himself with their party, and was delighted that honour and justice were also on that side. With peculiar pleasure he heard that the boyárin's retainers, forgetting the title of heretic—a name so hateful to them—which had attached itself to him, loudly sang his praises for having thrown back the despot's guerdon. Who could tell but

that, from this desire to obtain their regard, he might perhaps have embraced their side even in a less laudable quarrel? Could he then be blamed on this occasion? Let any young man in his place cast the first stone. His feelings may be guessed when he saw that circumstances began to connect him every day more closely with Khabár's fate.

His love for Anastasia, strengthened by obstacles, assuredly played an important part amid these agitations of his mind, and in his sympathy with her brother. Without definite object, without being able to render any account to reason, this love was nevertheless perpetually acquiring fresh violence: it made a still greater advance from the following circumstance:—

When Antony returned home with Khabár, the morning, heralding a splendid day, had already dawned. To see their farewell, no stranger could have guessed that one of the young men was accounted, by the family of the other, a minister of Satan. Admittance through the wicket was obtained for Khabár, by the devotion of a servant. Antony opened his gate with a key which he carried with him. He stopped on the stone steps to take breath after his rapid walk, and to inhale the fresh vernal

air. The gardens on the declivity of the town hill, and beyond the Moskvá, were bursting into leaf. They seemed as if they were covered with a veil of green. The river Moskvá, free'd from its icy fetters, was putting off its thin curtain of mist, as if to show the proud loveliness of its waters and the fresh verdure of its banks. Through the fantastic shifting shroud of this mist, could be seen now the cupola which crowned the Donskói monastery, gleaming over the meadows, then the white walls of Símonoff. Hardly had Antony found time to cast an eager and delighted glance over this picture, so new to him, when the well-remembered window creaked over his head; he looked, and—can he trust his eyes?—does he dream?—at the window appears Anastasia, at an hour when the birds had hardly begun lazily to prune their wings. Yes, 'tis she, but pale and sorrowful. It seemed to Antony, from the appearance of her eyes, that she had been weeping, and that she shook her head as if reproachfully. . . . . He doffed his bonnet, and stood before her with his hands clasped, as if imploring her for some grace; but the fatal window closed—the lovely vision vanished.

Not knowing what to think of this mournful

apparition, Antony remained for some moments on the steps; but seeing that the window did not again open, and fearing some indiscreet witness, he entered his own abode. Anastasia is sad—she passes her night in tears! he thought; and remembering all the marks of interest she had shown him—him, a foreigner, one detested by her father—he felt a sad yet sweet sensation, and applied to himself, with a feeling of pride and love, the appearance of to-day. He fell asleep when the sun was already high; but even in his sleep the form of Anastasia left him not.

Together with his heart examine the heart of the maiden, brought up in domestic seclusion, who had never left her chamber-cell, nor passed beyond the bounds of her garden, and suddenly touched with love. Add to this, that she every day beholds the object of her affection; add, too, her father's detestation of that object; add, too, that she was bewitched; that she, a mortal, could not hope to oppose the supernatural powers, which were not to be chased away even by the most passionate, the most ardent prayer. After analyzing all this, can it be wondered at, that she had already ceased to oppose those powers, and that she yielded herself to the enchant-

ment? Eagerly tracing the steps of the beloved stranger, Anastasia had remarked his departure from the house, the day before, with her brother—with her brother, who led a life of revel, whom her father frequently reprimanded for his nocturnal excursions. Was it surprising that he should seduce her lover also into this life of dissipation! Long did she wait for Antony, but Antony returned not. Never yet had he been so late: in her breast jealousy began to speak: she reproached her brother, she reproached the beloved stranger, with whom she had never yet exchanged a word, but whom she already accounted hers. She was melancholy, she was displeased, she accused herself of coldness, she wept. And at last he came. Let him see her weakness, let him know that she had been weeping, and for him!

The poor bird was alarmed at mid-day, by the appearance of the cruel vulture which had so often hovered round her nest. Again appeared Mamón in the house of Obrazétz; but this time not as the proud messenger of the Great Prince, but as a culprit, in the custody of two of the constables and two armed retainers. Before they led him from his house they had deprived him of his weapons.

In the name of the Lord Great Prince, they asked for Simskoi-Khabár, son of the voevóda. It was not without some fluttering of the heart that he awaited his sentence of death. Instead of his doom, they informed him that the boyárin Mamón, by order of Iván Vassílievitch, had brought him a hundred roubles as a fine for slandering Khabár, and was to strike the earth with his forehead; yes, he had come, that Mamón, the proud, the terrible, the vengeful, to beg pardon of his foe! And how could he refuse to come? he was sent by the Great Prince, Iván Vassílievitch. Horrible was the expression of his saffron face, distorted by the furies of his soul, his bloodshot eyes, his forest of sable hair, wildly standing on end. In such a form would the artist represent Satan, fettered by supernal power.

And he came, and gave Khabár a hundred roubles. —"A hundred roubles in full count," said he in a firm voice, and fell prostrate humbly before his foe, once—twice.—"That was for the Prince!" he cried; "but this is mine," bending over Khabár's foot, and leaving on it a deep bloody impression of his teeth.—"That is my mark," he repeated, with an infernal laugh. Well was he named Mamón. Kha-

bár uttered a cry, so severely was he wounded, and his first movement was to tear a handful out of his opponent's beard. They were instantly parted.

"To the lists! I challenge thee to the field!" shouted Mamón.

"To the field!" cried Khabár: "it hath long been time. Let God judge between us."

And the foes, having kissed the cross, and chosen seconds and sponsors, separated, thirsting for each other's blood.

Obrazétz, not desiring to witness his enemy's humiliation, was not present at this scene. When made acquainted with this catastrophe, he blessed his son. Notwithstanding the severe interdiction of the ecclesiastical powers, it was held disgraceful to refuse the trial by combat, to which any man was free to challenge another for a blow; and the prohibition of the ecclesiastical fathers was terrific:*

"And whatsoever man schal be deffyed vnto y^e^ Feeld, and schal com vnto anie Preeste for that hee maie receve y^e^ Holie Sacrament, the sam schal in noe wyse com to y^e^ Holie Communion, or kisse y^e^ Crosse: and whoso schal slay a man yn y^e^ sayde

* *Vide* the message of the Primate Photius to the citizens of Nóvgorod, in 1410.—*Note of the Author.*

Feelde schal utterly destroie and kil hys soule; and eftir y^e^ wordys of Basilius the Grete, hee schal be called and hyght an Assassin, and schal nat com ynto y^e^ Chirche, nor receve y^e^ gyftis, nor y^e^ brede, nor receve y^e^ Holie Sacrament eight and tene yeris . . . . He who ys slayne, him schal they nat bury." What a sentence for our religious, god-fearing ancestors! But honour, (though under another name,) which to them was dearer than every thing, claimed in their estimation the foremost place.

When they carried the news of this challenge to the Great Prince, he said—"Now it is not my affair, but the affair of the soudébnik."

The soudébnik contained the following law:—"Whosoever schal pluck or tere anothere manny's berd, and gif a wetenesse schal testefie thereunto, the sam schal kiss the Crosse and doe battel in y^e^ Feeld."

Against the law, laid down by the Great Prince himself, with his son and the boyárins, it was impossible to go; only it was ordered that the combat should not take placc before the army returned from Tver: for the campaign they needed a brave soldier like Khabár.

The word "Field" cast a gloom over the house

of Obrazétz, which, even without this cause of anxiety, was not too gay. This word fell like the stroke of a dagger on Anastasia's heart; she knew that she was the cause of the terrible enmity between her father and Mamón, and might become that of her brother's death. The word "Field" long went through the houses, as in our days the fatal card with the black border and death's heads. The passenger going by the dwellings of Mamón and Obrazétz, might already scent in imagination the odour of incense and of corpses.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CROSS.

" Ah, nurse, dear nurse—I feel so weary,
So sad and ill—I sigh and sob.
Oh, feel how my poor heart is beating!" . . . .
" Alas! thou must be sick, my sweeting!"
Help my child, O Lord, and save!
Whate'er thou wishest, ask and have . . . .
Let the holy water bless thee!
Thy poor cheek is burning, dove" . . . .
" I am not ill, nurse . . . I'm . . . in love." . . .

PÓUSHKIN.

KHABÁR's confidence in Antony the leech was so great, that he begged him to cure him of the injuries inflicted by the living weapon. The wound was tolerably deep; but how can we expect a young gallant, hardened by Russian snows, and the fatalism of his country, to pay any attention to danger? Under the operation performed by Antony upon his foot, he no more winced than if a bee had slightly stung him. Thanks to the force of youth and strength, and to the vigorous remedies employed by the physi-

sician, his cure was rapid: but even before his recovery, he showed himself to his comrades, and, covered by the veil of night, robbed the pretender to the Byzantine throne of some of his Haidée's burning kisses. The only thing that disquieted Khabár in this affair, was the sorrow of his sister; the cause of which was nothing but her lively interest in him: that there was any other cause he did not even suspect.

Anastasia, who was now enabled to attribute her melancholy to the campaign which was so soon to separate her from her brother, and to the approaching combat, no longer restrained her grief, no longer stifled her tears within her bosom. They assured her that the combat would not take place—that the Great Prince, by his all-powerful command, had reconciled the foes; that Khabár would content himself with exacting the fine of a few *altines* fixed by law for a *bloody wound*, and that the whole affair would be forgotten. These assurances tranquillized her on her brother's account, and at the same time concentrated all her thoughts upon one object, all the energies of her soul, that had before been divided between two persons equally dear to her.

Equally dear? God only knows! His eye alone,

glancing to the depth of her breast, could see that her affection preponderated to the side of the heretic, so completely had enchantment mastered her soul.

Anastasia, during a whole day, looked and listened as the troops were assembling for the campaign. Formerly she had delighted to gaze from her window on their movements, so triumphant, so full of life; she consoled herself with the thought, that the departure of the greater part of the young gallants of Moscow would give her more freedom to walk in the gardens with her companions, and to dance the round. But now the sight of these troops was intolerable to her; it seemed as if they were besieging her, and blockading her father's house. Did she open the window towards the river Moskvá, along the Great Street were filing dense masses of soldiers: did she go to the other casement—she saw the priests by the churches of the city blessing the standards; fathers, mothers, and kinsmen, incessantly entering the House of God, to perform the ceremony of *postríga* on their children, and to say prayers for the fortunate result of the campaign—she saw Iván the Young reviewing the troops. Did she open the window that looked into the stranger's

court-yard—there she saw nothing . . . . tears dimmed her eyes, and, sitting in the corner of her maiden bower, she could not forget herself: around her resounded the clattering of horse's hoofs along the wooden pavement, and penetrated to her chamber. On all sides she was besieged with signs of separation; her heart was overwhelmed with insupportable anguish.

In our times, an excellent education, the precepts of the mother and the governess, select reading, instruction from infancy in the law of God, moral examples, and the relations of society, early guard the young girl's heart from the sunken rocks past which she has to sail; teach her intellect to be ever on the watch against temptation, and to distinguish falsehood from truth, what is injurious from what is profitable.

What guarded the hearts of our great-grandmothers from temptation but walls and fences? What was their reasonable education, what the precepts and examples, what the social relations, which could impress upon them the dangers of love, and prepare the maiden's heart for the trials it was to undergo? A mother: a frequent recourse to God and the saints, it is true, was the substitute—and

sometimes an admirable one—for much of our modern education. But the precepts of the mother were, for the most part, confined to a rigid command to beware of the Evil Eye, to use the cross and prayers as a protection against diabolic influences; and whatever good might have been effected by the mother's exhortations in the heart of the daughter, was too frequently neutralized by the absurd conversation of the nurse and the tirewoman—tales about the adventures of bold and handsome princes, and songs full of the sweetness and melancholy of love. The walls were high, the tower and the chamber of the maiden were strongly guarded; but, let once opportunity aid the inclination, or the mere curiosity, of the heart—once that barrier passed, and sin, if not passion, triumphed over all—over the ties of family, over maiden shame, over religion. How numerous were examples of boyárins' daughters, tempted by wandering gallants, flying with them to the wild greenwood, and there leading, with their paramours, a rude and robber life! Songs—those faithfulest legends of manners—prove this better than any thing.

However it might be, whether from unreasoning pliancy, the influence of the fiend, or the law of

nature, Anastasia was entirely mastered by her love, and no longer dreamed of opposing a feeling which she attributed to magic. Like her companions, she had lived in maiden seclusion, was nourished in the same prejudices, felt the influence of the same tales and songs as disturbed the judgment of her friends; and, remark, she had not above her a mother's eye —a mother's daily blessing; besides, every day afforded her the opportunity of beholding the young and attractive foreigner, from whom she was separated only by a fence of wood; and cannot the heart overleap such barriers?

And thus Anastasia, given up wholly to her love, was agitated by the thought that she was to be separated for a long period from the object of her affection. However she might examine her heart, however she might struggle to expel from it the Latiner, the Papist, the necromancer—she could not do it. Think as earnestly as she might, she could not tell the meaning of the words "Latiner" and "Papist;" something it must be, and something terrible—evidently, it meant a servant of the Evil One—of that sort accursed by the holy councils. However, her godson, Andrióusha, had often assured her—had sworn by all the saints—that Antony was

a Christian, that he believed in God, the Holy Virgin, and the Saints of God. How was she to examine into this; and, at the same time, how was she to save him from the agonies of hell? Long and earnestly did she meditate on this, till at last her heart inspired her with a great project—difficult, indeed, for a maiden brought up in rigid orthodoxy. What could be more precious to her than the crucifix which she always wore suspended round her neck? This holy thing, the sacred present of her mother, had never left her person since her baptism. It guarded her from sickness and misfortune, from the thunderbolt, and from the malignant beams of the star that strikes in the darkness of the night. It linked her to heaven, to all that her burning faith had imaged there, to her guardian angel. This sacred talisman, the pledge of purity of thought and feeling, had plighted her to the Lord; it was to descend, a holy heritage, to her posterity, as it had come down to her from her grandmother and great-grandmother, or accompany her to the grave, a sinless and godly virgin. She would have to present it at the terrible day of doom, without spot, without the rust of deadly sin; and yet with this holy relic, this sacred heirloom of family and heaven,

she resolved to part—she resolved to give it to a heretic to save his soul . . . . and lose her own! . . . . no, it would be a good work to turn a Latiner to the orthodox faith. What struggles, what agonies, what prayers, did not this sacrifice cost her! . . . . and yet she determined to make it.

To the performance of her intention Andrióusha was necessary; he was her godson, and the confident of all the secrets of her heart. She began to expect him with impatience—time was precious.

Her father and brother had gone to the Field of Kóutchkoff to see Aristotle prove an enormous cannon—the triumph of his skill in foundery. The greater part of the domestics had accompanied them. Andrióusha had come to visit his friend Antony, but had not found him at home. The boy was preparing for the *postríga*, (to which the Great Prince had consented, notwithstanding his little favourite's not having attained the legal age for warfare, sixteen years.) Perhaps he feared that he would not have another opportunity, before his departure, of seeing his godmother, whom he so fondly loved. He was sorry to leave Anastasia, she was so pretty, so caressing; she kissed him so sweetly, just as his mother had been wont to kiss him; and he came to bid her farewell.

How was Anastasia to begin the confidence which she was about to make to her godson! She prepared to speak, and yet she trembled; she was as pale as death, as though she were summoning up her courage to do some great crime. Andrióusha remarked her agitation, and enquired if she was not ill.

"I am not well," said Anastasia; and then, after a short pause, making an extraordinary effort, she took Andrióusha by the hand, pressed it eagerly, and asked him if he loved his godmother.

"Next to my father, those whom I love most are thyself and Antony," cried the boy, kissing her hand.

From the maiden's innate modesty, and because it was contrary to the Russian customs, she had never before allowed him to kiss her hand; but now she only gently drew it back; then arose and looked if there was any one at the door of the hall: as soon as she was convinced that no one could hear her conversation except Andrióusha, she asked him whether he loved the leech.

"Again I say, I know not what I would not do for him and for thee!" replied Andrióusha in a voice of lively interest.

"If so, I would ask thee touching a matter. Didst thou not tell me that Antony is baptized?"

"I did."

"That he believeth, as we do, in the Lord God, the Holy Mother, and the Holy Saints?"

"I am ready, even now, to swear it."

"Wherefore, then, say they that he weareth no cross?"

"My friend is wont to say, that *his* cross is in his heart."

"I understand thee not. That is something strange to me. Behold now, if all this be so, if he be not leagued with the Evil Spirit, will he not put on my cross?"

The boy's eyes sparkled. "Love me no more, let me never again behold thee," he cried, "if my friend doth not put on thy cross, and wear it."

"I will then .... I will give him my cross .... But hark thee, Andrióusha, my dove" .... she could not finish; but he instinctively understood that in her words there was a question of life and death.

With a trembling hand, flushed and agitated, Anastasia took off her cross. It was a large silver crucifix, bearing an image of the Saviour in black

enamel; a small bag was attached to it. Gazing fearfully towards the door, she suspended it round Andrióusha's neck, carefully concealing it in his bosom. All this was done with great haste and agitation, as though she feared that her resolution would fail: her fingers were entangled in the silken string, and she with difficulty disengaged them.

"Tell him to cross himself in our manner* when he lieth down to rest, and when he waketh from his sleep," continued Anastasia; "and beware, Andrióusha, betray me not; do not ruin me! . . . . reveal not to my father that . . . . Swear it!"

She said, "to her father" only, confident that her godson would never divulge it to any one else.

And Andrióusha, trembling like the accomplice in some crime, bound himself to secrecy by the most solemn oath he could think of—"Maybe," he added, imperfectly comprehending his godmother's agitation, and desiring to tranquillize himself and her, "maybe, Nástia, we shall convert him to our faith by this cross. God knoweth whether this gift

* The Russian mode of making the sign of the cross differs from the same rite as performed by the Roman Catholics. In both cases the fingers are carried first to the forehead, but thence, instead of applying them to the *left* shoulder, as the Catholic does, the Russian proceeds to the right.—T. B. S.

of thine may not be on his breast, when thou standest with him in the church, under the crown." *

"No, Andrióusha; speak not to me of the crown .... It is not for that I do this .... I only grieve that he is a heretic .... I would save him from the molten pitch in the other world" ....

"Oh, Nástia, if he goeth not to Paradise, who can hope to come there?"

The nurse's cough was heard; the pair, who had concluded their secret treaty, hastened to recover from their confusion, and bid farewell to each other. Andrióusha promised to visit his godmother again before his departure with the army.

When Andrióusha was gone, Anastasia felt her bosom cold, cold, as though a mass of ice lay on it. She was plunged in tormenting thoughts, and now for the first time there rushed into her mind the difficulty of concealing from her nurse the absence of her cross. Where could she have put it? where lost it? Forgetting what had passed, she murmured to herself incoherent words, then felt for her crucifix,

* During the celebration of the Russian marriage ceremony, two crowns are held, one over the head of the bride, and the other over that of the bridegroom. This office is performed by persons chosen from among the wedding party by the "happy pair."—T. B. S.

and missing it, was in agonies of despair. She had exchanged her mother's blessing for deadly sin; she had sold herself to Satan. Poor maiden! It was clear she was brought to this by necromantic power.

"What aileth thee, my dear?" enquired the nurse; "thou art all on fire; thou sittest shuddering, and murmurest unintelligible words."

"I am ill, dear nurse; I know not what I ail myself."

"Hath not some evil eye beheld thee? hast thou not caught cold? Drink some Epiphany water, my darling; 'twill take away thine ailment like a charm."

Anastasia took her nurse's advice: with a prayer and a sign of the cross she drank the water, and felt somewhat relieved. Was it to last long?

CHAPTER VII.

THE KNIGHT POPPEL.

This is the place to relate how a new character appeared to take a share in the drama of our hero, and perhaps to perform one of the most important parts. This was Nicholas Poppel, a knight of the empire, the nephew and adopted son of the Baron Ehrenstein. Tall, handsome, active, haughty, and self-confident, he possessed all the exterior merits, and all the brilliant vices, calculated to please a courtier who possessed the same qualities. Ehrenstein, in adopting him, had gratified, at the same time, himself and the Emperor, who showed peculiar favour to Poppel on account of the journey he had made to Muscovy, a land of wonders, as it was then represented. The Emperor expressed his satisfaction at the excellent selection which the baron had made; after this, how could the baron, devoted as he was to ambition, thinking of nothing but his own advancement, allow himself to entertain so

much as the thought of confessing, that a son of his —a leech—who had been renounced by him from his infancy, had it in his power to stain for ever an escutcheon, which he himself considered equal to the blazon of many a crowned head! How could he venture, by the discovery of his fatal secret, to irritate his sovereign! His heart was hackneyed in the struggle after courtly laurels, and the voice of nature was unheard amid the chorus of passions, singing their music upon one and the same motive. It seemed as though all circumstances concurred to cherish in his heart this petty passion, and to extinguish the faintest spark of conscience—all things—even the court at which he, with others like himself, were rolling the wheel of fortune over the wrecks of feudalism—even the guide himself of this wheel. The court was plunged in frivolity; the Emperor, by his littleness of soul, made foreign nations wonder, and his own despise. This emperor was Frederick III., a monarch powerful in the resources of his empire; but contemptible in those of his own character. We remember how he terrified the Roman Pontiff by falling unexpectedly upon him on Christmas Eve, and how all this menace, which had made Rome fly to arms, finished by Frederick's kissing the Pope's hand and foot, holding his stir-

rup, publicly reading the gospel in the habit of a canon of the Church, and at last departing amidst the laughter of the very persons who had been so terrified by him. Greatness of mind and weakness in a sovereign, are communicated to his court, and influence even the popular masses. This was said long, long ago, and has often been repeated: was it wonderful that the character of the baron, weak, frivolous, inconstant, perpetually wallowing in the slough of selfishness and vanity, should have found a new source of baseness in the vices of his sovereign? If even he did think of his son, it was only how to prevent any hint of his plebeian existence from reaching the ears of the Emperor and of his courtiers. To the honour of our times, such characters appear to us monstrous; but in the fifteenth century, and even for a considerable time later, they were not unfrequent.

Hearing of Antony's love for science, hearing of the attachment exhibited towards him by the leech Fioraventi, the baron was delighted both at the one and the other: both the one and the other would break for ever his humiliating connexion with the disinherited son. The self-devoting love of the baroness for her child did not alarm her husband;

on this side he was secured by Amalia's oath, that she would never dare to disclose the secret of Antony's birth, nor attempt to claim for him his lawful inheritance. Under this condition she was permitted to see her son at the poor Bohemian castle; after her interviews with him she had more than once attempted to touch the heart of the cruel father; but failing in this, and only irritating her husband by her pertinacity till he treated her more coarsely than before, she retired altogether to the Bohemian castle. There she shut herself up, as if in a convent, passing her days in prayers for the welfare of her favourite. The choice of Poppel as the heir to their name and rank would have cruelly wounded her, had not the tidings from Moscow, which she received through the countrymen of the Jew Zacharias, faithful to his promise of gratitude—tidings of the favour shown by the Tsar of that country, and honours heaped upon her son—consoled the unhappy mother. From this moment all her thoughts and feelings turned towards the East. Muscovy became dearer to her than her native land. This country, which she had hitherto accounted barbarous, she began to figure to herself as a kind of Eden: its mere name threw her into a sweet agitation; she drank in with greediness

all reports about it, to trace in them some slightest vestige of her darling son. There he would be happy without his baronial title—there he was safe! Why should not Antony remain in Muscovy? At his first call she determined herself to retire to that country—that land which her heart had drawn nearer to herself. There even death would be sweet, with him for whose sake alone life was precious to her. We have seen that the baron's tranquillity on the score of his disinherited son had been disturbed by Fioraventi's intimation, that he had been devoted to the profession of physic: we have seen how the baron quitted his defensive attitude, and began to act on the offensive by menaces of employing more formidable weapons—menaces which had driven Antony to take shelter under the protection of the Great Prince. In the mean time, the reports of the favour shown by that ruler to the leech Ehrenstein still further alarmed the proud father, and necessitated a new and more anxious vigilance. He began to apprehend that Antony, by means of the intercourse between Iván and the Emperor, now become more frequent, might endeavour, at the instigation of Fioraventi, to pursue his lost rights, and disclose all the secret of his birth and education, all so humi-

liating to a baronial heart; and therefore, on ascertaining that the Emperor had determined on dispatching a new ambassador to Muscovy, to confirm and strengthen his amicable relations with its sovereign, he succeeded in having this mission confided to his nephew and heir, Poppel. To this Frederick III. the more readily consented, from Poppel having been, as we have probably mentioned, in Muscovy some years before, and consequently being well acquainted with the ruler and the court of the country. On the former occasion the baron's nephew had visited Russia rather as a traveller in search of adventures than in any diplomatic mission. He had been commissioned by the King of Rome, Maximilian, to learn what kind of country was that eastern land, about which reports began to reach even to the house and court of the Cæsars, and the affairs of which were beginning gradually to connect themselves with the politics of Europe. As he had arrived in Muscovy without a suite, the Russians would not believe that he was an ambassador from the Roman sovereign; he had, however, been enabled to boast of having received favours from the Great Prince, whose delight it was to see foreigners arrive at his newly-created court, to admire his

power, and to carry back accounts of that power to their own country. This time the knight Poppel came to Moscow as an actual ambassador from the Emperor, with presents and full credentials.

Though not informed by his uncle of the family secret involving the birth of Antony, he was, however, empowered by the baron to discover what sort of a pretender to the name of Ehrenstein was to be found in the leech of the court of Iván; and to endeavour by every means in his power, without injuring him, to impress upon the Russian sovereign that the leech Antony was of low extraction, and had adopted, without possessing any right to it, the noble name so illustrious in Germany. If Antony had happened, unintentionally, to bear the name of Ehrenstein, and was content to bear it quietly, without boasting of his family, and its distinction in the empire, or preferring any claims to baronial rank, then Poppel was instructed to leave him in tranquillity. Who was more likely to execute this commission with rigorous punctuality than the person who had been selected to inherit the haughty baron's name and rank? Assuredly the knight Poppel, armed with such powers, and such splendid hopes, would be likely not to show any want of energy in

defending his rights: it was only to be feared that he, from the lightness of his character, might overstep the authority entrusted to him—an authority, on this occasion, sufficiently limited. He reached Moscow two days before the trial of the enormous cannon.

On the day of his arrival, Antony received a visit from the deacon Kourítzin. Every interview with this wise and science-loving deacon began with the communication of some favour or gracious message from the prince, with an offer of his services, or a warning against some danger. All this he said and did as in the name of some mysterious personage, who had *commanded* him to be Antony's protector, and to watch over his welfare. Commanded? Who could this be but the Great Prince? It was not he, however. Even had Kourítzin brought to these interviews a heart full of friendly interest, his conversation, overflowing with the love of science, would always have rendered him a welcome guest to Antony; in this manner the solitude of Ehrenstein was becoming gradually more and more peopled with love, kindness, and friendship. The only thing which gave him pain was the stern and obstinate estrangement of Obrazétz himself.

The deacon, having informed him of Poppel's arrival, added that he was charged by command of his secret master, whom he always called his preceptor also, to place Antony, from that time forward, more particularly upon his guard. At the moment of communicating this warning, he gave him a letter. 'Twas written in the well-known hand of the Moravian brother. Heavens! 'twas a letter from his mother. The missive was kissed a thousand times before Antony's trembling hands could break the seal. It informed her much-loved son how she rejoiced in his welfare; hinting, also, that in consequence of certain circumstances, involving a family secret, his mother desired that Antony should remain in Muscovy, whither she intended to follow him as soon as he had obtained a permanent settlement in that country. The baroness cautioned him to be on his guard with the imperial ambassador, the knight Poppel—"This man is perilous to thee," added the tender mother; "he hath been adopted by the Baron Ehrenstein, a relation of ours, who is favoured by the Emperor, proud, out of measure ambitious, and who would count himself and all his house disgraced, if he should hear that his namesake is a leech."

What tender love breathed, like a perfume, through this letter! Antony read and re-read many times each expression, which only a woman, a mother, or some creature equally loving, could have linked together into such simple and powerful eloquence. These expressions had not been hunted for in the intellect or the imagination; they fell direct from the heart to the pen. Even so are precious pearls shaken from their cradle by the slightest touch; while the poor, unripe, and worthless ones can only be obtained by forcing open with violence the close-shut lips of the shell. A man who loves says *almost* the same thing, but not *quite* the same; perhaps more sensibly, but never with such an insinuating sweetness. Antony's mother begged him to remain in Russia; she herself desired to join him: and why not? thought the young man, inflamed by the dream which his heart approved. Is not her will the will of fate? The sovereign of Russia held him in high honour; Iván the Young, the heir and hope of Russia—good, brave, and generous—was singularly well-disposed towards him. The Russians, at least many of them, were ceasing to cherish ill-will towards him, and with time would love him; already he had made friends even among them. He might

always visit his preceptor when he pleased. There was also one being which became, day by day, more dear to him, which flitted round him in his dreams, nestled in his bosom, and implored him so tenderly not to depart. You will guess that this was Anastasia: for her sake he would have exchanged his fatherland—the wondrous sky of Italy—its earth, that luxurious flower-sprent cradle, where the zephyr, nourished on perfume and softness, hushes the favoured child of nature with the harmony of Tasso's song; for her he would exchange the Coloseum, the Madonna, the Academia—all—for the grey heaven of the North—for the deep snow, the wild fir-trees, and the barken huts, with all the ignorance that dwelt beneath their roofs. What then! His mother would bring with her his country; the wondrous heaven of Italy he would find in Anastasia's eyes, the burning noon on her lips, all delights, all possible joys, in her love. But his creed was not the same as hers: therefore it was that they had given him the name of Heretic—equivalent, in the eyes of Russians, to that of Tartar. By simply adopting the Russian faith, he might annihilate all the barriers, all the obstacles, that so completely divided him from the family of Obrazétz. It was

only on this condition that Anastasia's hand could ever be his; but then he would be a traitor, and from interest. Never would he consent to that!

"No, it is not my lot to possess this treasure," he said to himself; and all the while sweet flattering thoughts sprang up in the ardent dreamer's head and heart, and gave him some inexplicable hope. The very obstacles, the very strangeness of the German's love for a Russian maiden, gave additional fervour to that love.

"Be cautious with Poppel, I entreat thee, my dearest son!" These words seemed to cast a dark gloom over his mother's letter, and over his own heart: 'twas strange! Kourítzin, too, had warned him against the same person.

"Was it my fault," said Antony to the deacon, in a familiar conversation with him, "that I was born an Ehrenstein, and that fate brought into the world a haughty baron, a namesake? God be with him! I would not force myself into his family, and I am willing to forget him as wholly as if I had never even heard his name. The baron is childless, and hath adopted Poppel; can these worshipful knights fear that I should put forth claims to their inheritance? O, they may be quite easy on that score! I

am proud enough to spurn all honours and riches, even though the law adjudged them to me, without my humiliating myself, without my suing, or making myself unworthy of honours or of wealth. My name is my lawful possession; I will not change it to pleasure any haughty baron on the earth. It is an honour to me, not because it is borne by a baron of the empire, but because I bear it. My profession hath not disgraced it; and I know how to make it respected, if any dares to cast a stain upon it. I will never be the first to insult any man—my mother, and those who desire my happiness, may be assured of that; but I will never submit to the insult of another. Both nature and education have taught me how to wash out in blood any blot upon my honour. well are such styled offences of blood. I will be cautious with Poppel; such is the will of my mother. The further I can keep from him the better; but if the haughty lordling attacks me—let him beware!"

The knight Poppel was received on this occasion with extraordinary honour, as the imperial ambassador. Officers met him at some distance from Moscow, to congratulate him on his safe arrival. A deputation had been selected for this purpose, consisting of the dvorétzkoi, the deacon Kourítzin,

and some boyárins. This train was attended by the inevitable Bartholomém, whose duty it was to translate word for word whatever the ambassador might say. They were all splendidly attired in their glittering dress of ceremony: the sun seemed to joy in being reflected from their robes. The procession attended the envoy to the lodging prepared for him. The deportment and language of the boyárins expressed profound respect; and their quiet simplicity and ceremonial etiquette only swelled the knight's vanity, and blinded the little penetration he possessed. He prepared to lead these simpletons astray: the cunningest of all, at least in his own estimation, was Bartholomém. In the mean time the "clowns," as the ambassador called them behind their back, had already thoroughly penetrated his character, and put themselves in condition to give an accurate account of his moral and intellectual qualities.

The ambassador, intoxicated by his own grandeur, swelled and strutted, talking in a manner equally thoughtless and ill-bred. He often twisted his mustache, played with the golden fringe of his mantle, smoothed with a look of vanity the velvet of his dress, and jingled his spurs like a boy, among

his late comrades and playfellows, when he has just put on for the first time the uniform of an officer.

"What, when I came to your country before, fair sirs, ye would not believe that I was the Emperor's ambassador! He hath," said ye, "but few servants; he giveth no largess of ducats or velvet. Now, look ye!" (he pointed to the crowd of court attendants, who stood at a respectful distance behind him, all gallantly attired.)

"We see, Lord Baron Poppel," replied the dvorétzkoi; "we beseech thee, hold us not in fault for our former unbelief. We be but simple, foolish folk: we live out of the world; we know not the usages beyond sea."

"Would ye have ducats—right noble ducats? I can dress all your officers in Venetian velvet."

The deputation bowed profoundly to the golden calf.

"Would ye letters—a 'sheet,' as ye call it—from my great Emperor, lord of half the world? Here," (he pointed to a silver coffer which was standing on the table,) "I bring letters to your illustrious Prince. Ye paid me but scant honour before, but your lord sees far; he hath eyes of reason. He speedily understood the knight Poppel; and, there-

fore, my sovereign offereth to confer on the Great Prince, his dear friend, the dignity of king."

"Our lord, the Great Prince of All Russia, Iván Vassílievitch," answered Kourítzin firmly, and drawing himself up, "desireth the friendship of the Cæsar, but not his favour; an equal cannot *confer* on an equal. I speak not willingly; but if any thing is confided to your highness by the Emperor, it is not for us to hear his illustrious words—it is for our lord, the Great Prince of All Russia, to answer, not for us."

Poppel blushed slightly, and endeavoured to conceal his confusion under the tinkle of his spurs. The deacon's words, however, had stopped his mouth for a time, and rendered him grave; and not without reason. He had assured Frederick, that Iván, though a powerful and wealthy prince, would hold it a signal favour if the Emperor were to confer on him the title of king: but the thing was done; he bore a proposition on the subject to the Great Prince, and still confidently hoped that he could fascinate his ambitious heart with the splendour of royalty. When Poppel's confusion had passed, he expressed a desire, on the part of his master, to receive as a present from Iván Vassílievitch some living elks, and

at the same time one of the nation called the Bogouliáts,* who eat raw flesh; and he added, that the Emperor was displeased that he had not brought with him, on his return from his former visit to Russia, specimens of these animals and men. Then, haughtily raising his head, he enquired of the dvorétzkoi, whether Antony the leech had been long in Muscovy.

"Since the feast of St Hierasimus of the Crows," replied the dvorétzkoi.

"And doth the most mighty and most illustrious Iván admit a vagabond into his presence?"

"Our lord, the Great Prince of All Russia, holdeth the leech Antony in high honour, and ofttimes permitteth him to behold his royal eyes, and by them even the rabble is enlightened."

"'Tis pity—great pity! 'Tis a mere Jew villain and cheat. I knew him at Nuremberg; he began there by doctoring horses, then allied himself to the Evil One, and grew addicted to necromancy."

The interpreter smiled, and turning to the boyárins, made a sign with his hand, as much as to say —"You see! I told you so!"

* Bogoulitches, inhabitants of what is now the province of Berezóff, in the government of Tobólsk.—*Note of the Author.*

"Then," continued Poppel, "he began to try his leech-craft on men; and sent them into the next world by dozens at a time. They would have hanged him; but he managed to hide himself somehow, and to fly to your country."

The boyárins gazed with horror at each other: the deacon Kourítzin alone, did not exhibit on his countenance the slightest sign of astonishment or fear. It was not worth his while to spend his words in a dispute with the knight: a man will not enter into an argument with a boy. Bartholoméw made a dot-and-go-one movement with his leg, and then, transforming his attitude into a figure of a note of interrogation, exclaimed—"A Jew rascal . . . . he must undoubtedly be so, most illustrious ambassador! I saw it at once the moment I looked upon him, and said so to all I met. An accursed Jew! Ay, ay! indubitably. And he speaketh through the nose with the true whine of Israel, and is as arrant a coward as we usually find among the Hebrew pack. Sometimes he is as proud as if he were fain to spit in the face of Heaven; then, again, you have but to speak a little sharply to him, and anon he will tremble you an' 'twere an aspen leaf."

"I am well content that here, at least, you have penetrated him, worshipful Master Interpreter."

"Now, many of us count him a trumpery quacksalver: I have proclaimed him to all Moscow. Without boasting, I may be bold to say, most illustrious ambassador, I have but to hint a thing, and at all ends of the city they cry—'That must be so; the court interpreter hath said it!' O, Russia knoweth me, and I know Russia!"

"I shall entreat thee to be useful to me too, in repeating my words!"

"I will not fail—I will not fail! I will soon spread new tidings about him on the wings of zeal," (dot-and-go-one again of the lame leg;) "and I will do it out of love for pure truth," (another hop.) "How we shall bless you here, most noble of noblest knights, if you can prevail on our lord to kick the Jew quacksalver out of the bounds of Muscovy!"

"That is easily done. I will open Iván's eyes: I will offer him another leech. I have in my eye a man not like that mountebank: namely, Master Leon, the Emperor's court physician—such a jolly knave, such a jester! And a wonderful master of his mystery. For example, once the Emperor wished to try how far his skill could go: he ordered them

to have him baited with dogs. The dogs rent him to tatters, but all of them died, and he?—he died too, think ye? or at least was laid up? No, he healed all the wounds, and the next day appeared laughing at court, as if nothing had happened."

"Wonderful!" cried the interpreter, and hastened to communicate to the deputation this triumph of medical skill.

The boyárins crossed themselves with signs of fear and astonishment. Kourítzin alone, with an expression of incredulity, shook his head.

"And how call you this fellow here . . . . this . . . . Jew?"

"Antony the leech," replied the dvorétzkoi.

"He hath, I suppose, some surname?"

"I think Hershtan, my lord."

"That is, Ehrenstein," added the translator.

"Ehrenstein! And doth the villain know whose mantle he hath put on? . . . . In the whole empire, methinks in the whole world, there is but one Baron Ehrenstein: he is near the person of my Emperor, Frederick the Third: he is lord of broad lands, and richer than many provincial princes of Russia. He hath no children; and I, the knight Poppel, simple as I stand here, have been accounted by him

and the Emperor worthy to be inheritor of the illustrious name and rank of Baron Ehrenstein."

"The Almighty knoweth whom he honoureth with such high favours," said the interpreter.

"We will teach this base pretender—we will finish his schooling," interrupted Poppel, growing more heated, and with a sneer. Then he turned to the deputation, and said, bowing courteously—"For the present, permit me to bid ye farewell, fair and worthy sirs; and to entreat you to convey to the high, mighty, and thrice illustrious Lord of All Russia, my gratitude for the signal honour he hath shown me in sending ye to greet me; I feel, to the bottom of my heart, the weight of this honour, and shall endeavour worthily to deserve it."

The boyárins respectfully took their leave; there, however, remained with the envoy, as was customary, two officers. This was intended to be a mark of honour, and, at the same time, to keep a watch upon his movements. Poppel made a sign to the interpreter, requesting him to remain.

"Go, good fellow, to the leech Antony," he said to Bartholomëw, "and tell him that I, ambassador of the Roman Emperor, command him, a subject of the Emperor, to repair instantly to my presence."

"Is it to cure any of your servants? God forbid! Once a baron here, an old man, took it into his head to consult him. In a moment the leech sent him into the other world; and a boy, too, of the baron's, a servant—whom he loved as a son—only touched the lips of the dead, to give him the last Christian kiss *—he, too, gave up the ghost, so strong was the poison that Antony had given to the dead."

"O, disquiet not thyself! I would not trust him with a cat of mine. Only do my bidding."

Almost out of his wits with delight—like a man possessed of the demon of vanity, Bartholomew presented himself before the leech Antony. Tone, attitude, gesture, expression—all marked a sense of importance, beyond any thing that had been seen or heard of in him before. This unusual ecstasy did not escape Ehrenstein: he measured him from head to foot, looked him all over, and could not refrain from laughter.

The interpreter began to unfold his mission, puff-

* At a Russian funeral, just before the corpse is carried to the grave, the face of the dead is uncovered, and all present approach to kiss the forehead, therein offering "the last Christian salutation."—T. B. S.

ing for breath, but still preserving his tremendous majesty:—" The ambassador of the most high and mighty Emperor Frederick the Third, the thrice noble knight Poppel, by addition Baron Ehrenstein, (here he looked ironically at Antony,) commandeth thee, the leech Antony, to appear before him without delay."

" Commandeth? . . . . me! . . . . without delay?" . . . . said Antony, continuing to laugh with all his soul—" Thou hast mistaken, methinks, Signor Great Ambassador of ambassadors."

" I tell thee what I heard with mine own ears."

" Ay, they are long enough . . . . Are any of his train sick?"

" No."

" And if I go not, what—will my head be firm on my shoulders?"

" I will not answer for it. Beware! Antony the leech!"

" Then go thou, most illustrious interpreter, and tell this most illustrious ambassador, and knight, and baron, that he is a churl; and that, if he would see me, let him appear before me, Antony the leech, by addition Ehrenstein—plain Ehrenstein, without the 'Baron;' and, at the same time, tell that fool,

formerly printer, Bartholoméw, that if he dareth to show his face to me, I will cut off his long ears." (Here, with a vigorous hand, he compelled the interpreter to make a most scientific pirouette, opened the door, and hurled the contemptible being out of it so violently, that his feet clattered down the stairs as if they were counting the steps.)

CHAPTER VIII.

THE GIFTS.

" Aye keep well this talisman :
'Tis Love's gift, and it will aid thee
More than magic ever can ! "

PÓUSHKIN.

Moscow, which at the period of our story spread over numerous suburbs, wards, and outskirts, enclosed between them groves, fields, and meadows. The most extensive of these fields were those of Vorontzóff and Koutchkóff; in the first of which was situated a palace and gardens of the Great Princes of Muscovy—a favourite summer residence of the sovereigns. Here they enjoyed the sport of hawking: from hence they went to chase wild beasts in the deep forest which covered the eastern bank of the Yaóuza; from hence they could revel in the distant view of their Kreml—the quarter beyond the Moskvá, the Daniléffskii monastery, and the suburbs on the further side of the Yaóuza. In front,

straight across the stream, whose rapid current was interrupted by numerous mills, the Great Prince's palace gazed face to face on the holy walls of the Andrónieffskii convent. The *Vassílieff field*, (where now is situated the Foundling Hospital,) for the most part marshy ground, lay between the *Great Street* and the *Varskaía* Street, which was higher up. The Koutchkóff field began at the Church of the Purification, the name of which awakens such numberless recollections of our liberation from the Tartar yoke; a high mound of earth ran along it by the ford of Zaneglínnaia, and there quitting it, served as a boundary to this ward and its pool, finally ending at the river Moskvá. The imagination would but confuse itself in tracing the other boundaries of the Koutchkóff field, which was year by year intersected by fresh lines of street, erected by the increasing population of Moscow. The topography of those days is so complicated and so obscure, that the patience of a Balbi would find it an insuperable stumbling-block.

The appearance of the Koutchkóff field was highly diversified: smiling pastures, rich harvests and groves, and steaming swamps. There, between the streets, fed flocks and herds, or moved long

ranks of mowers, or gleamed the reapers through the waving corn; there cried the land-rail and the corn-crake; the nightingale poured forth his burning song, or the groan of the murdered traveller died away unheard. On the day on which we are about to visit the Koutchkóff field—a day bright and cheery, lighted up with gay sunbeams—along the meadow extending from the Purification Church to the marsh, (where now are the Clear Pools,) the people were scattered in numerous and motley crowds, apparently awaiting some spectacle with joyful impatience. The Great Prince himself, with his son and a train of courtiers, (among whom Andrióusha had succeeded in being,) was sitting on horseback under the grove which shaded the walls of the monastery, and seemed to share the impatience of the crowd. Within sight of them, close to the marsh, had been constructed a wooden hamlet, at which they were about to fire the immense cannon recently cast by Aristotle.* Several foolhardy young men, reckless by daring or by fatalism, had concealed themselves at daybreak in this wooden fort, and there lay perdue, fearing only that the constables

* The most immense cannon of this time—the Tsar cannon—was cast by Debosis.—*Note of the Author.*

should drive them from their hiding-place—*i.e.* that they should save them from danger of death. In the thicket, too, was stationed the knight Poppel on foot, concealing himself behind the officers and Bartholomew from the sight of the Great Prince, to whom he had not yet been presented. He enquired of the interpreter whether he could see the leech Antony, who had succeeded in offending him so bitterly by his disobedience. What were his feelings, when the interpreter pointed out to him a tall handsome German, in a velvet mantle, gracefully managing a fiery steed! The Great Prince was seen frequently to turn to his leech, and appeared to be conversing with him most graciously. Bitterly was Poppel undeceived: he had previously made an imaginary portrait of Antony, whom he had pictured to himself as a little sickly dwarfish individual, with a red beard. His face grew livid with rage: hate and envy sparkled in his eyes: he bit his lip: he thought he beheld in the person of the young German his rival as well in the favour of the Russian sovereign as in the pursuit of his family rights. The leech threw him completely into the shade by his manly vigorous form, and his graceful deportment: his dress, too, was not less rich than that of the imperial am-

bassador, and was even in better taste. The spurs alone were wanting (Poppel remarked even this!) . . . . to make him equal to the illustrious knight; but even the spurs might be granted him by the Great Prince. From this moment he vowed to humble Antony, to trample him in the dust, to annihilate him: this was the internal vow made by the noblest of noble knights! . . . . Poor Antony! and was it thy fault that thou wert born so well-looking?

"It comes, it comes!" shouted the people; and immediately after these exclamations, in the direction of the forest, which blackened both banks of the rivulet named the Neglínnaia, streamed a many-coloured throng, over whose heads gaped a huge brazen gullet. This was a cannon of extraordinary size and calibre; it seemed to be reclining, as it were, on the shoulders of the people who were dragging it along, and it wallowed heavily from side to side, as though delighting in its triumph. Joyful shouts accompanied and received it; behind it came Aristotle, on horseback. Those of the people who were nearest extolled his might, his skill—even kissed his feet. "Ey, what a mother of cannons thou hast made!" they said, in ecstasy, struck with the idea of power embodied in the engine

he had constructed. Try to touch the mob as powerfully with the idea of the Beautiful!

When the cannon arrived at the destined spot, Aristotle commanded the German artilleryman (this duty was usually performed by Germans) to lower it from its truck: then levelling it at the wooden fortress, he fixed it on the carriage, and ordered the gunner to load it with powder, and to put in the ball, which was nearly as large as a man's head. The people were warned to retire to a greater distance. The match was already burning in the hand of Aristotle himself; he prepared to apply it to the touch-hole and . . . . he stopped; a thoughtful shade passed over his face, his hand trembled. What if the gun should burst? . . . . He feared not for himself; no! but for his creation—his cathedral—which would perish with him. He raised his eyes to heaven, crossed himself, applied the linstock to the cannon—the brazen throat belched forth a burst of smoky fire, a report followed; the neighbourhood repeated it in numberless echoes. It seemed as though the foundations of the earth were shaken: a part of the people fell on their faces, thinking that an enormous iron wheel had just thundered along the ground. Again a report,

yet louder; again—and the people, becoming familiarized to the sounds, arose crossing themselves, and blessing themselves from peril of the bearer of the thunder. They look—the wooden fort was already in flames. Hardly had Aristotle explained that he would fire no more, when loud shouts filled the air, and the artist was lifted on high in the arms of the delighted crowd. In this triumphal manner they carried him to the Great Prince. Iván Vassílievitch was transported with joy: he threw a golden chain around the artist's neck, kissed him on the forehead, and gave him the title of gold-bearer. The people were in raptures at these favours shown to a man who had cast a bell to call them to prayer, cannons to conquer their enemies, and was preparing to build a cathedral to the Holy Virgin.

Suddenly, from among the burning ruins of the fort, there arose joyful cries, the breeze swept aside the smoky curtain, and there appeared, one after the other, two heads: they belonged to the pair of daring harebrains who had concealed themselves in the building. Providence had preserved them. Excepting some trifling bruises on the limbs, they had suffered no injury whatever.

"Well done, lads! well done, gallants!" roared the people to them.

And for a praise like this, they had wellnigh sacrificed their lives! Such, from time to time immemorial, has been the Russian.

The Great Prince, delighted with the successful trial of the cannon, and resolving to make use of it at the siege of Tver, bade farewell to Aristotle, and galloped off to the city, followed by the whole train of courtiers, and among them Antony. A cloud of dust rose up behind their horses, and, drifting over the thicket, enveloped the imperial ambassador. The mob had hardly observed him, and had paid no particular attention to him. One spectacle, by its superior interest, had distracted them from the other. Enraged and sullen, Poppel, slouching his hat over his eyes, and plunging the spurs into his steed, wreaked his vengeance on the poor animal. Galloping home, he shut himself up alone with his gloomy thoughts.

On the other hand, Antony was all joy, all triumph. That day the Great Prince had been unusually gracious to him; for which there were two reasons. He knew that Aristotle, so useful, so indispensable a servant, loved Antony like a son; and he endeavoured on this occasion to express his good-will towards the artist, by showing favour to those belonging to him. Iván had also already heard of the insolent

message of the ambassador to his court physician, and desired, by the kindness of his demeanour towards the insulted person, to compensate for the outrage offered by the haughty baron. As he rode with Andrióusha to his own lodging, Antony retained no recollection of the affront which had been offered him by the German envoy. He was, however, less delighted by the favour shown him by the Great Prince, than by a secret voice that seemed to whisper in his heart, and prophesy something unusually agreeable. This presentiment was confirmed by Andrióusha's mysterious words, promising him, as soon as he reached home, to make him a present, so precious, so invaluable, that he could not even conceive it in his imagination. Anastasia has some share in this secret! thought the young man, urging forward his steed. When the gate of his quarter was opened, he, without waiting till they removed the lofty horizontal bar, boldly dashed his horse over it.

"Speak quickly, quick! Dear Andrióusha, what is thy secret?" enquired Antony, almost before they had entered his chamber.

The boy assumed an important air.—"What I have to tell thee is no trifle," said he in a slightly

agitated voice, and trembling. "They say that in this matter lieth the salvation of thy soul."

"Explain! torture me not!"

"Here, in Moscow, report goeth abroad that thou art leagued with the Evil One. I know that this is false—a calumny of foolish and wicked people. Thou art only of the Latin faith, like my father, as I myself was; a Latin, but a good Christian. It seemeth, however, that the Russian faith is, somehow, better than yours; otherwise they would not have made me change my former religion. Thou sayest, that thou bearest the cross in thy heart. Nástia and I understand not this, and we are much afflicted at our uncertainty. Wilt thou not set our minds at ease?" . . . . (Andrióusha drew forth the massive silver cross from his bosom, and undid the string from his neck.) "Take this cross, whereon is the image of the Saviour, put it on, and wear it. This cross is Anastasia's—her mother's dying gift. She hath taken it off for thee—for the health of thy soul, for thy salvation. May it protect thee in all thy paths, and bring thee into the Russian Church! Ah! mayest thou one day meet there my godmother!"

As Andrióusha spoke these words, tears streamed

over the eloquent missionary's burning cheek; nor could his young friend repress his feeling. He bathed the precious gift with his tears. He covered it with burning kisses. Crossing himself, Antony put on the crucifix. "Behold!" he said, "I put on her cross with joy—with rapture. Tell Anastasia this; tell her, that every day I will pray before it—that it shall never leave me, unless they take it from my corse . . . . No, no! what am I doing, what am I saying, fool that I am!" he added, recovering from his first feeling of rapture.

A dreadful thought flashed on his brain. He loved Anastasia with a pure yet ardent love; with what definite aim he knew not himself; but whither would his acceptance of the cross lead him? Would it not betroth him to Anastasia as bridegroom to bride? To a Russian maiden!—to one that could never be his until he changed his religion! To possess Anastasia, he must become a traitor to his faith . . . . 'Twas no light cross that he was about to bear. Could he dare to refuse it? In what light would he appear to her? As a necromancer, as a magician, as one leagued with the Fiend . . . . Was he, then, to plunge blindly into the fatal future! . . . . He reflected, too, that Anastasia, by relin-

quishing, from love to him, her cross, her mother's blessing, might repent of her sacrifice—that the thoughts of that sacrifice would afflict her. Meanwhile he would wear the cross, but only for that day —to-morrow he would restore it to Anastasia. By this he would prove to her that he was not allied to the powers of evil, and that he was a good Christian. By giving back the cross he would tranquillize her. Thus he would reconcile his duty and conscience with his love.

"I will not hide from thee," said he to his little friend, as he prepared himself for this moral triumph, "that Anastasia had acted unwarily in sending me this priceless gift unknown to her father, even though what she hath done arose only from desire to help and save her brother's soul; and I have perhaps, unreflectingly, said what thou oughtest not to have heard. And thou too, poor boy! hast fallen into this sad struggle, which was unfit for thee . . . . I am the cause of all. Forgive me, dearest friend, dear brother! . . . . Thou knowest not the fatal passions that tear the heart of man, and cloud his reason, even till God's noblest creature becometh like unto the beasts. Never mayest thou know those passions, pure and noble creature! Thy years are years of

Paradise: woe to him who troubleth them! . . . . See now, I take the cross, and I put it on with Christian joy and gratitude; but to-morrow I will restore it. I will never give her cause to repent. The blessings of a mother cannot choose but be dear to her. Her sorrow would poison, for me, all the sweetness of her gift; it will only remind me how grievous must be for her the sacrifice that she hath made at the cost of her health, of her tranquillity; and for the preservation of both the one and the other, I am ready for any sacrifice, for any torture. Learn more surely, this day, this moment if possible, whether she doth not encounter such a danger. Look with attention in her countenance; see whether thou dost not mark the trace of sickness, the shadow of grief. Listen to her words, to her voice. Conceal nothing from me! Tell her, in my name, all that thou hast seen or heard. Bless her for her priceless gift! Say, that from this day forth I will cross myself with the Russian cross, and pray with the Russian prayers. Thou wilt teach me the Russian prayers, wilt thou not? I will begin and end them with a thought of her."

Antony spoke this, interrupting his words, now by showering kisses on the dear missionary, then again

by drawing the cross from his bosom and pressing it to his lips. The boy saw his friend for the first time in such an agony of agitation; his lips formed the words convulsively; his eyes gleamed with a kind of ecstasy; his cheeks were flushed. Andrióusha was terrified by the agitation which he beheld: he already repented of having deprived both, perhaps, of tranquillity and health. Endeavouring, as far as he could, to calm his friend, he promised to do all that he requested; but the danger of witnesses prevented him, that day at least, from speaking to Anastasia on the subject of their grand secret.

Antony's fears were prophetic: a storm had already gathered over the head of the enchanted maiden.

At midnight the old nurse had cautiously risen from her bed, and looked how her foster-child was sleeping. The poor girl was quite feverish: her swan-like bosom seemed to heave laboriously. The nurse was about to throw over the maiden a covering of marten skins: she looks with falcon eyes—"Holy Mother of God! her cross is gone! Lord, good Lord! what can have become of her cross?" The old woman wellnigh shrieked. She sought around the chamber—'twas nowhere to be found! Perhaps

the string had broken, and the cross was lying by her side, under the pillow. At any rate, she must wait till morning. The whole night she never shut her eyes. In the morning she looked for the cross, in the bed—under the bed—'twas not to be seen. She then began to observe whether its absence was remarked by Anastasia Vassílievna. No! not a word on the subject. Only in dressing herself, the daughter of the boyárin, with apparent confusion, concealed her bosom from the nurse. The latter ventured to speak about the cross—Anastasia sobbed; and at last, on the nurse's promises, vows, and oaths, not to tell her father, the maiden said that she had probably dropped the cross as she was walking in the garden—that she had sought for it, but could not find it. To what tortures can we compare Anastasia's condition at this moment! And even the nurse felt no slight suffering. To tell the boyárin, would be to confess herself in fault for not remarking how the cross was lost: not to tell him, might endanger her life. Whether to tell him or not, the old woman could not decide: it finished, however, by her fearing to afflict her mistress, and hoping to recover the lost crucifix, and concealing its loss from the boyárin, who was severe and implacable on such occasions.

I had almost forgotten to relate, that on the same day the knight Poppel visited Aristotle to complain of the insolence of the leech, who was confided, as he heard, to the protection of the artist.

"He hath acted as he ought," replied the artist.

"What, a scoundrel Jew dare to disobey the Emperor's ambassador!" shouted the haughty baron.

"'Tis a slander unworthy a common man, much more an imperial dignitary! Leave such reports to the printer Bartholomew. None but a fool would believe them."

"At least he is a quacksalver."

"Say rather, physician to the court of the Lord of Moscow. Know that the pupil of my brother is of a blood as noble as thine own, and hath equal rights to respect."

"I suppose, because he playeth the baron! What, Sir Artist—dost thou design to make a real baron of him?"

"Nothing would be easier. He hath but to claim what is his of right."

"Verily! . . . . And, I suppose, as Baron Ehrenstein?"

"Undoubtedly, as what he is."

"This is Moscow news; at least, we know it not at my master's court."

"If it needs, they shall learn it there also as an ancient title of blood."

Poppel grew more and more enraged, and snorted with fury. The artist spoke with courtesy, sang-froid, and calmness.

"Dost thou know that this right is mine—that I am ready to defend it with my sword?"

"This time the sword of the knight will be broken against the law and the word of the Emperor."

"In his Majesty's name, I demand from thee an explanation of these riddles of thine."

"I will give it when I count it needful. I respect thy master equally with other crowned heads, but I acknowledge not his sovereignty. I am a citizen of Venice, and am here under the powerful protection of the Russian sovereign, Iván, third of the name."

"My sword shall force thee to explain thyself."

Aristotle burst into a laugh.

"And this instant; if thou hast but a spark of honour."

Poppel seized the hilt of his sword.

"Gently, young man!" said the artist sternly, laying his hand on the knight's shoulder; "moderate thy passion; it can in nowise help thy business. Compel me not to think that the arms of honour are,

in thy hand, nothing but a dangerous plaything in the hands of a child; and that the German Emperor hath chosen to represent his person at the court of Moscow, not by a reasonable man but a hot-brained boy. Think again, Sir Knight! Look on my grey hairs—at my age I might be thy father, and dost thou challenge me to a senseless combat? What glory for the mighty hand of youth to be raised against the feeble arm of an old man! 'Twould be much to boast of! . . . . And in mine own house! Would they not call us both madmen. Believe me, I will not draw my sword. Thou mayest fall upon me unarmed, and exchange the name of knight for that of assassin. That I am no coward, the lord of Muscovy will tell thee, and his best voevódas; and therefore I counsel thee to employ thine arms and thine ardour in a better cause, and to seek a more equal combat. I will add, besides, Signor Knight, that violence, whatever it may do, can only hasten the destruction of the rights in which thou art unlawfully dressed. Be reasonable and calm, and perhaps fate itself may aid thee in spite of justice."

With these words Aristotle begged the knight to leave him, and not to detain him from the important duties confided to him by the Great Prince. In

case of refusal, he said he would be obliged to call in from the antechamber the two officers who were enjoined to watch the ambassador.

The knight Poppel was rash and haughty, but not brave. In men like him true courage cannot exist. He only wore its form, and this could deceive inexperience alone. "What a well-made fellow!" you cry, admiring the graceful outline of some elderly dandy. "'Tis all buckram, my dear sir, buckram and skill; nothing else in the world!" his valet-de-chambre will tell you, and unmask before you this artificial Antinous. Just so was Poppel's courage. Abashed, feeling the good lesson he had just received, and full of dim ideas of a rival about to dispute his rights to the inheritance of a noble name and rich estate, he left the artist: but even then he would not confess his defeat. With his nose haughtily lifted in the air, like some bawbling shallop just cast by a mighty billow on the beach, he hummed, as he passed through the door, the gay song—

"O, Charles the Great was an emperor bold!
Seven bastards he had, no more:
They all did dream of a crown of gold,
Yet only one it wore."

CHAPTER IX.

THE CAMPAIGN.

" O whíther fly, my gríef to 'scape?
To fórest green, my wóe to slay?
To rívers bright, my wóe to drown?
To súnny fields, my wóe to lose?
In fórest green 'tis thére with me!
In rívers like a téar it flows!
In súnny plain the gráss it dries!
From fáther and from móther aye
I híde myself, I eárth myself."

MERZLIAKÓFF.

YOUTH, like strong mead, foams and swells over the brink until it calms itself. It was to the revelry of youth that Khabár devoted the whole night, in which now wine, now struggles with his comrades for supremacy in sports, now love, in turn called into play all his vigorous energy, and in all he came off victorious.

The morning star lighted him from the gate of the Despot of the Morea: the rosy dawn smiled on him as he reached his home.

Soon throughout the boyárin's quarter there began an unusual stir. Hither and thither bustled the domestics, bringing arms from the store-room, trying the paces of a steed, preparing an abundant provision of meat and drink for the armour-bearer, the squire, and other slaves, who were to accompany their master's son to the field. In the midst of all this bustle was heard the loud clattering of horses' feet, and immediately afterwards a numerous procession stopped at the gate. All who composed it were chosen men, matched in height and appearance to one another.

Their cheeks glowed with the purple bloom of health; their eyes sparkled like the glance of the falcon. "Largess to friend, death to foe!" was written on their haughty yet courteous brows. They were attired in short kaftáns of German cloth; on their heads were perched flat bonnets, coquettishly placed aside, giving them the air of gay wild gallants. A girdle, embroidered with silver, tightly confined their waist; by their side hung scabbards containing a long knife and a dagger, *entayled yn goldsmythis werke;* at their backs a cudgel, so ponderous that none but an athletic champion could wield it. From this band three men detached them-

selves, and dismounting from their horses, announced their arrival by means of a ring suspended from the gate-post. These were the *heads* and *hundred-men* selected from several *guilds* of the *silk-merchants* and *clothiers*, who were desirous of seeking *war-honour* before Tver. They had come, by permission of the Great Prince, to *bow* before Símskoi-Khabár, and entreat him to take them under his command. The son of Obrazétz, well known for his daring at feasts and in the city brawls, was no less celebrated for military bravery; he had already once led the volunteers against the Mórdvui, and had gained in that expedition a large share of glory for himself and for his troops. In his campaign against the Mórdvui, had been exhibited not only bravery, the quality of every private soldier, but the rapid intelligent glance of a general, skilful to take advantage of every means offered by the enemy's ground, and the customs of those against whom he was operating. He had also shown himself possessed of the power of inspiring love and discipline in his warriors, who obeyed his orders with good-will. The Prince Daníel Dmítrievitch Khólmskii, who had entrusted him with a detachment against Kazán, predicted, after this trial, that he would be a famous leader.

Iván Vassílievitch knew well how to appreciate these qualities, and on their account pardoned Khabár for the wild pranks of his youth; although he usually said, on these occasions, that he forgave him on account of Iván the Young's friendship for him. And now Khabár expected with delight the command of the volunteers. They were all entertained, and drank the *loving-cup*, which the old voevóda himself carried round to them, wishing each of them the success he desired. The next day they were to assemble at St John's Church, there to hear a mass —from thence to repair to the parish church of St Nicholas of the Flax, and thence—straight to horse. Obrazétz promised to obtain them from Iván Vassílievitch the favour of being sent in the *avant-garde*, in order that they, with the body-guard of the Tsar, might clear the line of march before the army.

At daybreak the next morning all the household of Obrazétz was on foot. When the hour arrived for arming his son for the march, the voevóda's face was clouded with sorrow: this was no transitory grief, like the vernal inundation which swells suddenly on all sides, roars over the whole country, and subsides as speedily as it rose, vanishing as though it had never been. No, the father's sorrow resem-

bled a clear fountain, which wells up half-unseen from beneath a ponderous stone, and yet feeds eternally some wide river. Many dark thoughts, during the past night, had risen in the old man's soul; and his anxiety was not unreasonable. He had already lost one son in war—that darling youth even now oft appeared before him in angelic robes; then pointing with indescribable anguish to a wound which marked his breast, seemed to wail forth—"It paineth me, oh, my father! yes, it paineth me sore." Then came his mother—what precious beings, and how bitter their loss! And now the old man, following them with his eyes, dismissed his remaining son to the war; and even if the battle should spare him, yet the lists awaited him at Moscow. If he should fall, who would remain to protect his sister—a maiden not yet settled in life? But dishonour was worse than death—"The dead feel no shame," is a saying valued among the Russians. Besides, he would never survive shame. All his trust was in the *ordeal of God:* the mercies of the Lord are uncountable. Trusting in them, Obrazétz proceeded to the oratory, whither, by his command, he was followed by Khabár and Anastasia.

Silently they go, plunged in feelings of awe: they enter the oratory; the solitary window is curtained; in the obscurity, feebly dispelled by the mysterious glimmer of the lamp, through the deep stillness, fitfully broken by the flaring of the taper, they were gazed down upon from every side by the dark images of the Saviour, the Holy Mother of God, and the Holy Saints. From them there seems to breathe a chilly air as of another world: here thou canst not hide thyself from their glances; from every side they follow thee in the slightest movement of thy thoughts and feelings. Their wasted faces, feeble limbs, and withered frames—their flesh macerated by prayer and fasting—the cross, the agony—all here speaks of the victory of will over passions. Themselves an example of purity in body and soul, they demand the same purity from all who enter the oratory, their holy shrine.

To them Anastasia had recourse in the agitation of her heart; from them she implored aid against the temptations of the Evil One; but help there was none for her, the weak in will, the devoted to the passion which she felt for an unearthly tempter.

Thrice, with crossing and with prayer, did Obrazétz bow before the images; thrice did his son and

daughter bow after him. This pious preface finished, the old man chanted the psalm—" Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the Most High." Thus, even in our own times, among us in Russia, the pious warrior, when going to battle, almost always arms himself with this shield of faith. With deep feeling, Khabár repeated the words after his father. All this prepared Anastasia for something terrible; she trembled like a dove which is caught by the storm in the open plain, where there is no shelter for her from the tempest that is ready to burst above her. When they arose from prayer, Obrazétz took from the shrine a small image of St George the Victorious, cast in silver, with a ring for suspending it on the bosom. " In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost !" he said, with a solemn voice, holding the image in his left hand, and with his right making three signs of the cross—" with this mercy of God I bless thee, my dear and only son, Iván, and I pray that the holy martyr, George, may give thee mastery and victory over thine enemies: keep this treasure, even as the apple of thine eye. Put it not off from thee in any wise, unless the Lord willeth that the foe shall take it from thee. I know thee, Iván, they will

not take it from thee living; but they may from thy corse. Keep in mind at every season thy father's blessing."

Anastasia turned as white as snow, and trembled in every limb; her bosom felt oppressed as with a heavy stone, a sound as of hammering was in her ears. She seemed to hear all the images, one after another, sternly repeating her father's words. He continued—"It is a great thing, this blessing. He who remembereth it not, or lightly esteemeth it, from him shall the heavenly Father turn away his face, and shall leave him for ever and ever. He shall be cast out from the kingdom of heaven, and his portion shall be in hell. Keep well my solemn word."

Every accent of Obrazétz fell upon Anastasia's heart like a drop of molten pitch. She seemed to be summoned before the dreadful judgment-seat of Christ, to hear her father's curse, and her own eternal doom. She could restrain herself no longer, and sobbed bitterly; the light grew dim in her eyes; her feet began to totter. Obrazétz heard her sobs, and interrupted his exhortation. "Nástia, Nástia! what aileth thee?" he enquired, with lively sympathy, of his daughter, whom he tenderly loved. She had not

strength to utter a word, and fell into her brother's arms. Crossing himself, the boyárin put back the image into its former place, and then hastened to sprinkle his child with holy water which always stood ready in the oratory. Anastasia revived, and when she saw herself surrounded by her father and brother, in a dark, narrow, sepulchral place, she uttered a wild cry, and turned her dim eyes around. "My life, my darling child, my dove! what aileth thee?" cried the father. "Recollect thyself: thou art in the oratory. 'Tis plain some evil eye hath struck thee. Pray to the Holy Virgin: she, the merciful one, will save thee from danger."

The father and son bore her to the image of the Mother of God. Her brother with difficulty raised her arm, and she, all trembling, made the sign of the cross. Deeply, heavily she sighed, applied her ice-cold lips to the image, and then signed to them with her hand that they should carry her out speedily. She fancied that she saw the Holy Virgin shake her head with a reproachful air.

When they had carried Anastasia to her chamber, she felt better. The neigh of a steed at Antony's staircase enabled her to collect her thoughts and come to herself. The sound turned her mind to the

beloved foreigner, and to the danger which would have menaced herself and him if she had betrayed the secret of the crucifix. The feeling of remorse was overcome by love, and in its place arose the desire to remove the suspicions of her father and brother as to the real cause of her illness, if such suspicions existed. She summoned up her energies to deceive, but as yet she knew not how. The words "separation from her brother," "the danger of war," "the weariness of solitude," cold and unconnected words, died away upon her lips. But it was not a difficult task to convince them, even without words, that these were the real causes. The dove, the water of the fountain, untrodden snow, were figured in the mind of her father and brother as less pure than Anastasia. Obrazétz would have slain the man who should dare to say the contrary; it would have been a death-blow to himself even to suspect it. In his head their perhaps flitted some dim thoughts of *ill;* perhaps of ill caused by the heretic; but that Anastasia herself could ever venture to enter into any plot of the heart with him, could not even be conceived by the boyárin's imagination. The voevóda and his son, tranquillized by her recovery, returned to the oratory; not, however, without

apprehension, that the benediction, so painfully interrupted, might turn out unfortunate. The father feared, that the cause of this unlucky accident was God's anger against his son on account of his dissipated life. Calling to his aid the words of the holy fathers, the examples of purity and sinlessness exhibited by many famous Russian warriors, who had earned glory on this earth, and an unfading crown in heaven, he exhorted Khabár to reform — "On thee, more than another," said Obrazétz, "lieth a heavy answer for thy sins. Thee the Lord hath gifted with reason, with bodily strength, with valour: to one is given a talent, to another two; to thee is given much, and thou tramplest it all in the mire. The Prince Khólmskii laudeth thy military talents, and hopeth that in time thou wilt replace me. The old men, once my companions in arms, and now thine, my heart—all tell me that the name of Khabár-Símskoi will be yet more famous in Russia than the name of Obrazétz-Símskoi. Thy father, thy sovereign—the Great Prince, thy native land, expect this from thee. Dishonour not my hoary head, trample not upon my bones when I am laid in the grave—upon the ashes of thy mother and thy brother. Forget not that thou hast a sister of an

age to be married: thy shame may fall on her—on all thy race. Remember that the *Lists*—the *judgment of God*—await thee here: to it thou must offer thyself with pure repentance, washed from every stain. Iván, it is time to repent; it is time to remember that I have not long to live. Soon I, too, shall depart to another world. What dost thou command me to tell thy mother there?"

The old man's voice was full of sorrow, though not a drop stood in his stern eyes. On Khabár's face the tears poured down in streams: he fell at his father's feet, and gave him a promise, in the name of the Lord, in the name of his mother, to reform from that moment; and to merit the love of his kinsmen both here on earth, and beyond the grave. As witnesses to his vow he took the saints of God. The promise was sincere; his strength and firmness of will were sufficient for its performance.

The faces of both father and son brightened up: their hearts, too, were more at ease. At the same time it seemed to them as though the oratory grew lighter, and the images of the saints gazed benignantly upon them.

At length the bells tolled for mid-day mass: mournfully they clanged; they announced to almost

every house the departure of one dear inhabitant at least. Anastasia made an effort, and without waiting till her brother came to bid farewell to her, went herself to meet him. Khabár, whom Iván Vassílievitch called his post-haste voevóda, was already in full armour. His old squire gazed with rapture, now on his charger, now on the glittering panoply, as though upon a creation of his own: the one he had decked out with all his skill; the other, with all his skill also, he had polished till it shone like a mirror. In the farewell of the brother and sister spoke love, the most tender, the most touching. Often was the iron cuirass dimmed with tears; often did the hard gauntlets imprint the trace of his embrace upon the delicate waist of Anastasia. All the domestics assembled in a crowd on the steps, and followed the boyárin's son with blessings. His father accompanied him as far as the church.

Some one came to meet him, proudly prancing on a fiery steed, which raised a cloud of dust as he curveted along. The people stopped as he passed, and doffed their caps. By his rich armour, by the steel helmet adorned with turquoise, by the silver inlaid work of the cuirass and sword, glittering in the rays of the sun, you would have taken him for

some noble youth who had just undergone the postríga; but in his face, his stature, his gestures, you would recognize in him a boy, delighted with his steed and armour as with a toy. It was Andrióusha, Aristotle's son—himself a toy of the Great Prince. He had ridden from the Church of the Annunciation, where the ceremony of the postríga had been performed on him: his appearance struck Obrazétz painfully; it recalled to his memory his own fair boy. Just such had been his younger son, when he was armed to attack the Knights of the Cross. The boyárin hastened to enter the church, and by prayer to stifle in his heart the mournful cry of nature. In bidding adieu to his remaining son, he clasped him in a long and strict embrace.—"The Lord be with thee!" he cried in a quivering voice; and these words accompanied Khabár throughout the whole campaign, greeted him when first he opened his eyes, and closed his lids to coming sleep. With these words he was armed more strongly than with his iron helmet or his sword.

Andrióusha hastened to pay his visit to Anastasia before the boyárin could return from church. In the antechamber of the upper room he met the nurse, who, congratulating him upon the postríga,

cautiously yet caressingly enquired, if the darling young gallant had seen her mistress's crucifix: perhaps she had dropped it, Andrióusha had found it, had desired to play her a trick, and had hidden it. At this unexpected question the little warrior fired up like gunpowder, but speedily recovered himself, and said with indignation — "Dost thou jest, nurse?"

And she began to swear, and call God to witness that she spoke the truth; and only implored him not to say a word about it either to Anastasia or to the boyárin.

"Thou knowest how stern he is," she added; "he will straightway cut off the poor woman's head. But if thou hadst seen, my darling, how thy godmother laments, how restless she is! she can neither eat nor drink, and talketh in her sleep of nothing but the cross. Ay, and methinks she repeateth also the name of the accursed heretic! Of a surety, the guardian angel hath fled from my child."

The old woman awaited Andrióusha's reply. Andrióusha was already in his godmother's chamber. Here he was met with smiles, welcomes, caresses springing from the heart; but under these roses the boy's observation plainly saw the serpent Grief. It

peered out through Anastasia's every word, every gesture. He did not long remain in the chamber; with his load of sad remarks he departed to the leech, and related all. How deeply touched was Antony at the recital! He upbraided, he cursed himself, for listening to two children, for taking advantage of the weakness of an inexperienced maiden, accepting from her a present which might ruin her for ever. To restore the gift, to print a farewell kiss upon it, and to pray to God that the crucifix might arrive in time to relieve Anastasia from all pain and danger —this is what Antony hastened to do. This prayer was heard; the cross was received in time.

Anastasia was deeply agitated when she saw it. It is plain he hath not worn it! . . . . she thought, and a kind of despair overwhelmed her. It had been better if her father had known of the loss of the crucifix. What would become of her? There was a time when the dwellers in heaven would not have renounced her, though the Holy Virgin herself might have looked into her heart: and now, black passions are boiling in her soul; her hands almost rejected the cross; her lips almost uttered—"Perish, then, my soul!" . . . . But the guardian angel arrested her on the brink of danger: she seized the crucifix, and with

tearful eyes placed it in her bosom; her godson, in broken fragments and with great caution, in order to escape the nurse's sharp eyes and ears, related his conversation with the old woman, the tormenting fears of Antony lest others might learn the loss of the precious crucifix—his fears for her health and tranquillity—Andrióusha related all—all that his friend had told him, and Anastasia could not but bless them both. She promised herself to be more cautious and more reasonable; she tried to promise to cease to love—but this she could not do. The cross passed from the bosom of the dear heretic to that of the maiden; and there, helped by Andrióusha's words, it added new fuel to the flame.

The cunning nurse, though she had heard nothing of what had passed between the godmother and godson, guessed that there was some secret concealed in it. These conjectures were confirmed, when, on undressing her foster-child, she saw on her breast the silver crucifix, which Anastasia took care, as if accidentally, to show. To communicate these guesses direct to the boyárin, she dared not: they might cause ill consequences to herself, to Anastasia, to Andrióusha: she might raise a conflagration beyond her skill to extinguish. She might, how-

ever, provide against future danger. To succeed in this, it was only necessary prudently and cunningly to hint to the boyárin that it was improper for Andrióusha to have free access to his godmother's chamber. He was, it was true, but fourteen years old—a mere child; and, besides, was so quiet—so well-behaved! But Andrióusha had just received the postríga by special favour of the Great Prince, Iván Vassílievitch; and the word "postríga" turned every boy's head. As he was fit for war, he could not be a mere child. Who would take the trouble to inform himself of the youth's age? Evil tongues would often hint harm which they dared not utter. The honour of a maiden ought to be like a mirror, which, though not defiled, is yet dimmed by an impure breath. As the nurse thought, so she acted. The boyárin thanked her for her sensible advice; and promised that, when Andrióusha returned from the campaign, his access to Anastasia should be interdicted, and he should be only allowed to speak to her in the presence of her father and brother. All was arranged as well as possible.

Antony himself, the cause of this family agitation—hitherto the unknown cause—determined to remove the slightest suspicion from the beautiful

creature for whose honour he was ready to lay down his life. He sought no further opportunities of seeing Anastasia. On the morrow he was to set off on the expedition with the Great Prince's train; and he instantly called for his horse, and rode away from the house of the boyárin, in order to pass the night at Aristotle's; from thence start on the march, determining never more to set foot in the dwelling inhabited by Anastasia. "Time," he thought, "reason, the impossibility of our meeting, will vanquish a passion which, perhaps, is nothing but the fancy of a maiden shut up between four walls. I will, at least, restore her to tranquillity."

As soon as he was left alone with his own thoughts, he cast back a glance on the path which he had trod since his arrival in Russia. Wherefore had he journeyed thither? Was it not that he might devote himself to the service of science and humanity, to gain a triumph for them? And what had he performed—this priest of the beautiful and of the good? He had cured a parrot; he had dressed gallantly; had succeeded in pleasing the Great Prince, and in leading astray the heart of an inexperienced maiden. A noble, a glorious triumph! Was it worth while to come so far for this? In Italy he

was at least free: but now he was the bond-slave of passion—now he could no longer hope to shake off its chains. He could never return to his native land; he had exchanged it for a foreign country: in Russia from henceforward he must live—in Russia die. To the house of a Russian boyárin, who detested him, were linked his thoughts—his whole existence: in that house lay all the weal, all the woe, of his life. There was his fate. Such was the account to which Antony called himself respecting his actual position.

In the struggle with his passion he promised to free himself from its slavery, and to quiet the cry which arose against it from the depths of his conscience. He promised; ay! we shall see which of the two young men, nearly of the same age, will possess strength of mind enough to perform his vow —the Russian wild gallant, or the steady bachelor of Padua.

The gates of the heretic's quarter were closed and locked up. Anastasia saw this: her heart and ears greedily followed the clatter of the horse's feet as it died away in the distance; drank in the last clink of the shoes, as though the sound were the dying beat of the beloved one's pulse ere it was for ever stilled.

He was gone . . . . the poor girl was terrified by her loneliness: her heart died within her: it seemed to her as if father, brother, kin—all the world—abandoned her, an unhappy orphan. Oh, with what delight would she now undergo the tortures of that morning and the preceding days, but to know that *he* was there—not far from her—in the same house with her: that she might behold him, might meet his eye, and even await his returning!

An unusual noise disturbed Anastasia's reverie. The tramp of horsemen filled the neighbouring street.

"Hark! they strike the atabal!" cried the nurse, rushing to the window. "Look! a great troop is going by. See, how the soldiers' casques and breast-plates glitter in the sun! And there is the voevóda at the head of his band: in his hand he beareth a shestopéor adorned with precious stones. In heaven there is but one sun; but there every gem is a sun! And how young, how handsome he is! Ah, Holy Mother! it is the young prince Iván. Oh, oh! but for Helena of Vallachia thou wouldst now be a princess: the Tsar would have loved thee, and kissed thy rosy lips; and thou wouldst have been able, my dove, to cherish mine old age: I should have slept

under marten skins, pillowed on swan's down, dressed in silk and sindal, and quaffed strong mead. But it was fated that the Vallachian should turn up to cloud our happiness, and to rob us of a dear bride-groom. She came hither to Russia, and brought us nothing but the Jewish heresy—she and the deacon Kourítzin; may she and the accursed deacon burn for it! Look now! the young prince Iván! if he be not grown as sad and gloomy as if he had become a widower yesterday! He mourneth for thee, my child. As he passed our house, his heart could not resist, and he looked up tenderly to thy window; and see! they bear the standard on a waggon!* Look, how it fluttereth in the breeze! Cross thyself, my child, before the image of our Saviour" . . . .

The old woman very reverently made the holy sign; and Anastasia, without looking out of the window, sitting on her bed, mechanically crossed herself. The nurse continued—" The image is embroidered in gold; they say that Sophia Phomínishna worked it with her own hands. Hey! what fair gallants! Who can tell! perhaps one of them is

* The great standard, like the oriflamme of France, the Scottish ensign at Bannockburn, &c., was borne on a wheel carriage.—T. B. S.

thy future husband . .. . . O, Lord! O, saints of mine! Look!—or do my old eyes deceive me? Ah, 'tis he, 'tis he, in verity! our tale-teller, Aphánasii Nikítin; his bare feet are fettered—his poor hands are fixed behind *with melted lead!**

In reality, they were carrying along the tale-teller, Aphánasii Nikítin, in chains, under a guard of constables. What had the poor man done? why this punishment? Thus it was: Iván Vassílievitch having been informed that he was a native of Tver, and that he knew every corner and every bush around it, ordered him with his own lips to accompany the army, and on arriving at the city to give any information that might be required of him. To this Aphánasii Nikítin answered—"The will of God is mighty in heaven, and the will of the Great Prince, Iván Vassílievitch, on earth. Let him order me to drown myself—I will drown; but against my native city, against the golden-domed cathedral of our Saviour, I will not go. Sooner will I drink mine own blood than consent to lead an army against my

* It is still doubted by antiquaries whether this cruel mode of confining a prisoner was actually practised, or whether it is only a technical expression for some severe method of chaining a culprit.—T. B. S.

kinsmen and my brethren." At these words the fury of Iván Vassílievitch was awakened—"What! this is not the voevóda Prince Khólmskii!" he cried in an angry voice: "A pedlar—a clown! Let him be put in chains, and carried to Tver whether he will or no. Since he refuseth to show us the road thither, we will show it to him, and further too!"

It was for this cause that the tale-teller, Aphánasii Nikítin, was in chains. The iron clinked as he went along the street, and the nurse began to lament. At these mournful sounds Anastasia arose. She took from her ivory coffer some small coins, and ordered the old woman to carry them to the poor prisoner. "I will take it, my dear," said the nurse, still gazing from the window, not to lose the pleasure of the spectacle. "I will take it, even if Iván Vassílievitch trampleth me under his horse's feet. Look! there is our heretic . . . . what doth he there? . . . . I must run, my child—I must run, not to be too late!"

Hardly had the nurse left the room ere Anastasia looked cautiously from the window, and saw that her beloved Antony had anticipated her.

In spite of his resolutions, he desired to pass

once more by Obrazétz's house, to bid farewell to *her* dwelling, if not to *her*—perhaps for ever. In doing this he came up with the main guard as it was beginning its march, and caught sight of poor Aphánasii Nikítin, to whom he had been made known by Andrióusha, and who frequently had conversed with him about the life and nature of the West; and he hastened to give the prisoner's guard a handful of silver. Aphánasii Nikítin looked gratefully at the leech; but the constable turned his back upon the heretic, and the silver was scattered on the wooden road. At this moment the nurse ran up and gave her mistress's money to the constable. The latter crossed himself and received it. With shame and mortification Antony rode away. It may be imagined with what feelings the daughter of Obrazétz looked upon this scene. All—all turned from the heretic; but she, unhappy girl! enchanted by the powers of evil, so fondly—so immeasurably loved him!

Long lay the scattered money upon the wooden road.

CHAPTER X.

THE SIEGE.

"Fair and softly goeth far in a day."

Old Proverb.

The troops made very short marches. They had not yet arrived so far as Klin, when the volunteers were already before Tver. These brave bands of irregulars, led by Khabár, spread terror around the city: at one moment they would make their appearance in the suburbs with shouts and cries, announcing storm and sack, at another they would vanish in the forests of Tver, leaving no track of their march. Khabár did not content himself with having a private conference with those citizens of Tver who were devoted to Iván, and who had previously been bought over to his interest; he was not contented with making a reconnoisance of the weak points in the enemy's fortifications; he passed the Volga, and

established a communication with the army which was advancing from Nóvgorod, under the command of the lieutenant of that city. Returning to the right bank of the river, he sent a message to the Great Prince, Iván Vassílievitch, informing him that, with his bands of the volunteers of Moscow, he would undertake to make himself master of Tver. He requested the assistance of Aristotle's cannon. Thus Khabár-Símskoi, together with his comrades, continued to deserve his reputation for activity and military skill.

Iván Vassílievitch, whom in all justice we may call *the delayer*, commanded a courier to convey his *word of favour*, first to Khabár, and secondly to all the volunteers, and to inform them that *he was coming*. And he continued to advance in the same tortoise-like manner as before. For the first person who dared to murmur rather too loudly against this dilatoriness, the Great Prince of Moscow showed his favour by building him an edifice in a cross-road —an edifice composed of two upright posts and a transverse beam. Aphánasii Nikítin was prepared for the same fate. He made himself ready to die with Christian firmness; but just as they were about to tie the fatal knot, his life was spared, and he was

permitted to go about his business. Whether this was done at the request of Iván the Young, or from the private impulse of the Great Prince, is unknown. However, it may be easily supposed that the Tveritchánin wandered away in the direction opposite to Tver, in order not to be a witness of the ruin and conflagration of his native city. For the road he was well provided by the generous gifts of the boyárins and common people, and by Antony he was presented with a balsam for his arms, wounded by the melted lead with which they had been fixed together. No man who encountered him ever heard him utter a word of complaint, either against the Great Prince or against his own fate. Praying both for the Prince and for his people, but more fervently for the preservation of his native city from destruction, and praising the Lord alone, he hastened back to Moscow to finish his half-told tales.

The Great Prince of Moscow ordinarily pitched his camp in large villages. There halted with him Iván the Young, the courtiers, the chief regiment with the imperial standard, Aristotle with the fire-arms, and the inseparable Tsarévitch of Kassím, Danyár. This prince enjoyed his particular love and favour for the fidelity with which he had served

Russia. In his person Iván wished clearly to prove how advantageous it would be to the Tartars to pass over under the protection of the Russian ruler. Already more than a week had passed since the troops had quitted Moscow. It was that hour of the day when the sun chases the dew and coolness of the morning. The weather was beautiful: all nature seemed to smile, and image the arrival of summer; and the rivulets, dancing in the sunbeams, all gold and flame; and the breeze, laden with fragrance from the foliage of the trees; and the billows of the eddying harvest, like the waving lines of burnished steel in the ranks of charging cavalry; and the choirs of birds singing, each in its own harmony, the praises of the Almighty. This enchanting smile, this imaging of nature, melted even the iron soul of Iván Vassílievitch. Passing the rivulet beyond the village of Tcháshnikoff, he ordered his tent to be pitched on an elevation, and commanded the troops to make a halt around. He rode up the eminence, took off his *korzn* (military mantle,) and dismounted from his horse. All this was performed with the assistance of different officers of the court: the ceremonial was kept up even in the field—even in the field he desired to appear a Tsar.

"Here I would fain build myself a village," said Iván Vassílievitch, admiring the scene.

And in reality it was something to be admired.

In general it is to be remarked, that man, from some innate tendency towards the beauties of nature —perhaps a trace of the first inhabitant of the earth —be he Tsar or peasant, loves to place his dwelling in a beautiful situation. Nothing but necessity, but force, can drive him to the arid plain, to the forest neighbouring the swamp. In the sites selected for the Russian towns, and the imperial pleasure villages, this taste is particularly observable. Iván Vassílievitch, in praising the lovely picture spread before him by the great artist, remembered his own villages, Voróbievo, Koloménskoye Island, his Vorontzóff field, where he met the spring, and passed the summer in the delights of hawking and wandering through the gardens. While they were pitching his tent, he seated himself on a folding-chair, which was always carried with him. Around him stood Iván the Young, and several of the officers of his household. Among them might be observed the round-shouldered Tartar, who associated more familiarly than any other person with the Great Prince. This was Danyár, Tsarévitch of Kassím, the object

of his singular favour.* In front of them, at the bottom of the hill, were running Andrióusha and a lad of seventeen, the son of the Tsarévitch—Karakátcha: the one, a type of European beauty, with the stamp of the Creator's love for his creature imprinted on every lineament; the other, narrow-eyed, tawny, with high cheekbones, and the serpent-like expression of one who had crawled into the world from some foul thicket of the tropics among the reptiles, with whom he had mingled his human nature. Karakátcha had caught a dove, and was preparing to chop it in pieces with his knife; Andrióusha entered into a struggle, to save the winged prisoner: inferior to the Tartar in strength, but far more dexterous and active, he succeeded in seizing the victim in time, and setting it at liberty. The momentary struggle was succeeded by a truce, concluded by the transfer of a piece of money, which seemed to give much pleasure to the Tartar Tsarévitch. Both the boys, throwing off the weight of their arms, hastened to relieve themselves of the heat which oppressed them, by bathing in the cool waters of the streamlet. Their companionship at the court of the Great Prince,

* In many of the writings of this period we remark the great care of Danyár's interests exhibited by Iván.—*Note of the Author.*

whither they went, as it were to school, every day, had brought them together, and forced them to forget the difference of their faith and manners, (Karakátcha was still a Mahometan.)

"Right noble boys!" said Iván Vassílievitch, turning to the Tartar Tsarévitch and the artist; "they will be great leaders in my son's time, if God doth not grant me myself to see it."

This praise brought a glow of satisfaction on the faces of the two fathers.

"And when are we to christen thy son?" demanded the Great Prince of the Tsarévitch.

"The hour will come; there is time enough, my good lord Iván," answered Danyár. "Thou thyself dost not hurry, yet thou dost great things."

"According to the Italian proverb, which Aristotle taught me—'fair and softly goeth far in a day.' And I do not force thee. Thy father and thou have served me faithfully, though ye were not christened. It was but for the salvation of his soul I spake of christening."

"'Tis yet but a foolish child. But if in fair field he cutteth off two Tveritchánin heads, then he will be a man; 'twill be time to christen him and find him a wife."

"Good! and I have a bride ready for him—a rare beauty! She must be of the same age as thy son."

"Who is she, my good lord?"

"The daughter of my voevóda Obrazétz."

At these words a slight convulsion passed over the lips of Iván the Young—Antony blushed and turned pale. Iván Vassílievitch remarked all this.

"I will give my boy to her," said the Tsarévitch with evident pleasure. "They say, she is a right fair damsel! she can embroider skull-caps; we will blacken her teeth—we will redden her nails—and in a twinkling she will be fit for our prophet Mahomet in Paradise."

Iván Vassílievitch laughed heartily at this criticism.

A tent was pitched for the Tsar, and a guard placed before it. Next to it they put up a church of linen, (they first spread the ground with skins, and then with cloth, on which they erected the altar; when they took down the church, they scorched with fire the place on which it had stood.) The Great Prince retired into his tent with his son; and all the attendants separated, each to his own quarters. The road to Tver on the northern side of the camp was carefully barricaded with iron railings, and waggons,

and guarded by sentinels. The troops (there were only cavalry in those days) scattered themselves over the neighbouring country, keeping the Great Prince's tent as the centre of the circle which they formed. And how were the troops quartered? What had they in the way of camp, of cantonments? They merely pitched the tent of each voevóda; beside it they placed the waggon bearing the standard of the regiment; next to this, likewise on waggons, the fire-arms, composed of matchlocks, and a cannon, if there happened to be one. The horses were allowed to range in herds over the meadows or the sown fields, as they might happen; the soldiers separated into messes around their voevódas, boiled their copper kettles, filled with a kind of soup composed of biscuit and oatmeal; sang songs, told stories, and all under the open sky, in spite of rain and snow, frost and heat. What cared they for the attacks of the elements! By nature and education they were hardened as if locked up in steel. The horses, brought from the Asiatic steppes, bore as patiently as their riders the hardest weather, and throve upon the most meagre food.

Mournful, gloomy, lay Antony in the tent of Fioraventi Aristotle. At the time of setting out on

the campaign, he had striven to silence the voice of his heart in the occupations of his profession. He searched all the recesses of the forest, he plunged to the depths of the ravine; he collected there plants, some whose medical properties he already knew, others which were unknown in southern countries: the latter he was preparing as a present to the place of his education. Did he halt in a village? there, with the assistance of his servant, he made enquiries for witches and wise women, who often possessed, as he had heard from Aristotle, medical secrets, handed down from generation to generation. Some of these secrets he succeeded in obtaining, with the aid of the terrible power of the Great Prince, or the force of gold. Thus, by returning to his learned occupations, he had placed, he thought, a strong and insurmountable barrier between himself and Anastasia, whose image still frequently pursued him. Obrazétz's prejudices, his aversion to him, his education, his country, his religion—a multitude of other obstacles which swarmed around him at the first thought of a union with her, came to the aid of science and reason, inducing him to stifle the feeling which had mastered him. But when Antony heard the name of Anastasia from the lips of an unbeliev-

ing Mahometan—that name which he pronounced with reverent love in the sanctuary of his heart—that name which was united with all that was most beautiful in earth and heaven; when he heard that Anastasia was to be given to a misbegotten Tartar—she whom he thought no one had a right to possess but himself and God—then his blood rushed backward to his heart, and he was terrified by the idea of her belonging to another. Never yet had this thought presented itself to his mind in so dreadful a shape. Like some passionate lover of art who goes day by day to a picture-gallery to worship one particular Madonna, and who suddenly finds that it is about to be brought to the hammer; and now the immortal one is chaffered for by pedlars—worldly wretches, contemptible shopkeepers, Jews, are appraising its merits—dare even to discover faults! The amateur would give for it all that he possesses —would give himself; but he has too little, he is too poor, he cannot offer a price, and the divine work must belong to another. In his soul already resounds the cry of the auctioneer—"going, going!" —with a sinking heart he sees the fatal hammer rise . . . . In such a condition was Antony.

And wherefore did he love Anastasia? . . . . He

had never so much as spoken to her; and to create so ardent and profound a passion as that he felt, small is the power of mere external loveliness. Small indeed; but in her eyes he beheld what the worshipper of art beheld in his Madonna—the loveliness of the soul; something indescribable, unintelligible; perhaps his own past existence in another world, a world before this earth; perhaps his future, his second, *I*—the personality with which he would form one in those *mansions*, *many* of which the Son of God has made ready in his father's house. Could he break up this union, those spousals of two spirits? could he give up to another his second *I* to worldly insult? No, that must never be.

Aristotle, with a father's eye, remarked the swift flush and the unusual paleness of Antony's face, which betrayed the secret of his heart, when the Great Prince mentioned the boyárin's daughter, and he saw how some immeasurable grief was devouring him. Rendered anxious by what he beheld, he endeavoured to engage the attention of his young friend, and began to discuss with him the character of Iván.

"Yes," said the artist engineer, "'qui va piano va sano:' this national proverb I translated for the

Great Prince into the Russian tongue. Iván was right well pleased with it, and no wonder; 'tis a precept to which he oweth all his successes. And therefore I intend to adopt it as a motto for the medals of the great founder of Russia."

"But doth he not abuse this cautious slowness?" exclaimed Antony, challenged to the lists of argument, from which his heart was far away. "Thou toldest me that Iván, by his crafty policy, had previously prepared every thing for the destruction of Tver. It seemeth to me, to judge by circumstances, that he hath but to menace it with the terror of his name and army, in order to attain the object for which he is now losing time."

"As far as I understand his intentions, Iván is desirous that the Great Prince of Tver should fly from his capital, leaving his city a safe and uncontested spoil. The latter is expecting aid from Lithuania, and thinks that Nóvgorod, so recently subdued, will not send Iván its army. The Russian Tsar knows for a certainty, that Tver will obtain no aid from any quarter: in his iron will he hath commanded Nóvgorod to march against the enemy, and, obedient to that will, Nóvgorod's army already stands before the walls of the monastery of the

Three Children. Perhaps the Great Prince, as thou sayest, hath in reality calculated too cautiously:—I will not dispute; he was born, not a warrior, but a politician. A slow, and I may add, penetrating policy hath always triumphed with him; all his successes have arisen from his knowing how to await the moment most advantageous *to himself.* Apparently, even now he dreads, or rather is unwilling to exchange for new, untried arms, that old trusty weapon which hath never failed him. It was well said by Stephen, hospodar of Moldavia—'I wonder at my cousin: he stayeth at home, making good cheer and sleeping quietly, and nevertheless defeateth his enemies. I am always on horseback and in the field, and yet cannot manage to protect my own country.' Yes, Iván doth not bustle to and fro, doth not prance unceasingly on a war-horse; he doth not brag of his conquests and projects, but silently, in secret, he prepareth great actions, the execution of which astonisheth other sovereigns. 'Luck, good fortune!' cry his ill-wishers and they who envy him. Luck! . . . . Luck may indeed, once or twice, in the absence of genius, crown him who plays his part on an imperial stage, be he general, counsellor, or king; but bitterly will that man be punished, who

trusts to luck alone without other great qualities: No! almost all Iván's successes may be attributed to the strength of his intellect, the firmness of his will, an active and penetrating mind, the art of preparing and profiting by circumstances. History will doubtless place him among the small number of great actors who have changed the destiny of kingdoms, and built up an edifice to last for many ages. The name of the founder of Russia will assuredly belong to Iván. And were it not for the cruelty of his character, a fault born with him, and strengthened by education and local circumstances, we might well be proud of the happiness of serving him. It is not for us, weak mortals, to prophesy his future; old age, peevish and infirm, usually injures the powers of the intellect, and confirms the evil propensities. But, however that may be, Russia must never pronounce the name of Iván, after all he hath done for her, but with veneration. If thou wouldst seek for spots in his reign—and from them the weakness of man permits not any ruler to be exempt—stern truth will point to one, and that no slight one. This stain is not to be wiped out by the eager justification of those who are devoted to him; it is not to be smoothed away by the persevering

sophistries of future reasoners, and the vain powers of their eloquence. Ye cannot make black white."

Carried away by curiosity, Antony requested the artist to explain what was the charge on which stern truth might summon Iván before the judgment-seat of posterity. Aristotle hastened to satisfy his desire. "What were the Mongol hordes to Russia?" recommenced Aristotle. "A curse of two centuries long, which lay upon this unhappy country in all the weight of its oppression. The East, overflowing with population, was ready to pour in, with that population, the elements of barbarism, whithersoever accident might direct the flood. The angels of God hastened to make Russia a bulwark to the West, where the flower of civilization was just bursting into bloom, and whither the conquerors were attracted by the hope of rich plunder; and thus Russia became an unfortunate sacrifice for the safety of the other nations. When her destiny was fulfilled, Providence granted her, even before the reign of Iván, a period of breathing-time. To Iván was left the glory of liberating his country from the yoke that for two centuries had oppressed it. Thus it was:—Akhmet, Tsar of the Golden Horde, appeared in Russia with a numerous army. According to his

custom, the Great Prince did not slumber. In the well-stored treasury of his intellect and his will, he found means by which he might be certain to repulse his terrible foe, and those means he prepared as well as possible. The enthusiasm of the people, its confidence of victory, the valour and power of the army, the unskilful calculations of Iván's enemies, the mistakes of Akhmet himself, all united to answer for the triumph of Russia. And what was the result? When the fatal hour arrived to strike the blow, when Akhmet himself evidently vacillated whether he should attack or defend himself, Iván's heart failed him—yes, his heart failed him, that is the right word—he began to delay, to procrastinate, to defer the attack. Yes, the decisive hour had arrived, the hour that must decide whether he was to lose the fruits of the triumphs won by intellect, or whether he was to enjoy them—whether Russia was to be free or not; and it is precisely in such moments that we recognize the greatness of a sovereign. At a moment when he would have been his own best counsellor in pursuing great measures, when these measures were successfully, assuredly prepared, he left the army and came to Moscow, under the pretext of taking counsel with his mother, with the

clergy, with the boyárins. His mother, the clergy, a majority of the boyárins, the voice of God, the voice of the nation, all urged him to fight the enemy. He did not listen to those whose counsel he had come to ask, but he did listen to the base courtiers, who knew how to profit by the weakness of their master; their underhand counsels flattered his failing courage. Instead of confirming the people in their heart and hope, he only alarmed them by his indecision, and by marked precautions to put his own family out of danger. The enemy was still far off; what had he to fear as to his family? When a king goes to defend his people's rights and honour in the field, the queen must remain with the nation as a pledge of its security—at least until the last extremity, if she hath not heart enough to die with the honour of that people. Iván, on the contrary, hastened in good time to remove Sophia and his children from Moscow, far away into the northern provinces. A strange policy, if he wished to tranquillize the nation! . . . . There remained in the capital, in the Monastery of the Ascension, the Great Prince's mother, a feeble old woman, and this head, already declining to the grave, served the nation as a pledge of security: in it was centred all the hope and con-

fidence of Moscow. What would that confidence not have been, if Sophia had remained? . . . . The nation expected that the Great Prince, after the example of Donskói, would hasten to the army; but all he did was to burn the suburbs, intimating to the people by this melancholy precaution, that he would await the enemy in Moscow. His presence with the army, which was impatiently expecting to see him at its head, would have been the best assurance of victory. Instead, however, of hastening to the troops, he summoned to himself—again to counsel!—the leaders of the army, his son Iván, and the Prince Khólmskii. And at what a time? When the latter, by his intellect, his valour, his experience, and by his glorious title of conqueror of Nóvgorod, was the chief strength of the army; when the former, beloved of Russia, was its soul. To leave their comrades at that fatal, that decisive hour, would have seemed to them a dreadful sin, for which they would have to answer before God, and both of them did their duty: both disobeyed the command of Iván. The Great Prince's flatterers blamed them; but Iván himself better understood their noble conduct and his own error—he never made them answer for their disobedience, and never punished them for it. At last he joined the army, and there he took care to

remain far from the place of action. He began again to procrastinate—for what? Was it that the spirit of his army should be chilled by inaction, that it should lose its courage and hesitate? The army fled at the first movement of Akhmet. But Providence was on the side of Russia. Akhmet, thinking that the cunning Iván was leading him into an ambuscade, himself fled; and when informed of the destruction of his own camp by the Tartars, left Russia altogether, in order to protect his territories. And this *good fortune*, this providential interference, Iván's counsellors attributed to his foresight, to his refined, to his treble-refined calculations. But words prove nothing if they are contradicted by facts. The people with more justice glorified only the mercy of God. 'It was not arms and the wisdom of man that saved us, but the Lord of Heaven!' said the people, following their spiritual pastors, and it spoke the truth. History is not panegyric, and history will say the same. I relate this to thee, not to cloud the greatness of Iván: he is the builder up of his kingdom, and, in spite of this grievous error, will be always great in the eyes of his contemporaries and of posterity." *

* It is not, perhaps, the duty of a novelist, to indulge in a di-

"Well, hast thou done with Akhmet?" enquired some one in a sharp voice, shaking the curtain of the tent.

Aristotle, in spite of himself, shuddered and felt confused. It was the voice of the Great Prince.

The curtains of the tent opened, and Iván, showing between them his countenance, contracted by an ironic smile, continued—"I have been here a good while, but all I have heard of thy tale is, 'Iván and Akhmet, then Sophia, and then again Akhmet and Iván.' Art thou not pleasant on some of my old sins? . . . . I will not conceal it; there was a time when I vacillated, hesitated, I know not how myself. Who would believe that now? . . . . To speak true, there was something to be afraid of! In one hour I might have lost all that I had taken years to arrange, and what I had projected for Russia to last for ages. The Lord delivered me. But . . . . as our proverb saith—'He that bringeth up old times, out with his eyes.' Do me justice in

gression respecting Iván's great fault. In justification I may allege my desire to offer a tribute to Truth, which guided the pen of Karamzín in his description of Iván's error; an error defended by M. Polevói without any historical or logical proofs.—*Note of the Author.*

this matter to the German. Good rest to thee, Aristotle!" With these words Iván Vassílievitch let down the curtain and disappeared, leaving the two friends in no small embarrassment.

CHAPTER XI.

THE UNEXPECTED ESCORT

" Lo, I bríng, I bring to thée, svat, a gíft,
'Tis a cóffer of gold with fórged arrows stóred,
And a cómb, a wondrous cómb, dóuble-toothed,
To equíp a gallant, like a mírror it shines.
With the fírst fair gift thy héart I will cómfort,
With the sécond fair gift I will láy thee to rést."

Old Song.

THE army of Iván inundated the environs of Tver for a distance of some dozens of versts. Its arrival was announced by a discharge of the gigantic cannon—one single discharge; but one which carried consternation to the houses and hearts of the people of Tver. The silence which succeeded was yet more terrible; it was like the momentary breathing-time which nature grants to the wretch who is lying on his death-bed. Night shrouded the city and its surrounding country with her gloom, but soon the latter sparkled with a thousand watch-fires, like the

rich pall of velvet which they prepare for the illustrious dead. What did Tver during this night? What doth the unhappy woman who is preparing herself for widowhood, who is unable to snatch her beloved, her darling, from the almighty foe? What doth she but sob and beat her breast!

The morning of the following day lighted up the hundred cantonments of the Muscovites; and the endless colonnade of smoke which arose along the plain. The monster-cannon opened in front its huge throat; suddenly, at the first ray of the sun, it seemed to yawn, and its awakening re-echoed through the suburbs of Tver; it shattered a number of huts, and crushed in one of them a whole family at once. Immediately after the giant, awoke its fierce children, and thundered out in their own language—"Wait awhile, Tver, we will give thee sorrow if thou doest not behave thyself." Thus, at least, were the sounds interpreted by the men of Tver, who ventured to look out from the farthest fortification on the camp of the enemy. They saw the German cannoniers fixing the matchlocks on their carriages and iron limbers; the soldiers weaving hurdles for the siege out of brushwood, and covering them with melted pitch; detachments armed with bows, swords,

and pikes, encircling Tver in a curved line on the Moscow side. They saw all this, and spread through all the houses the terrible news. "Tver is no more," they cried through the streets; "the harvest is ripe, the reapers are ready." A black raven at the same moment proclaimed death to the city from the cross of the golden-domed cathedral of our Saviour, and from the ridge of the Great Prince's palace. Not less bodingly, the princes and boyárins, the secret partisans of Iván Vassílievitch, scattered themselves among the people and defenders of Tver, whispering the impossibility of opposing the force of the Prince of Moscow. "Let him," they said, "make in his wrath one blow with his mighty arm, and he levelleth his foe to the earth; when he overfloweth with mercy, he is as the sun after rain." The day arrived, and they appeared before the Great Prince of Moscow with offers of submission.

Tver was already subdued without a conflict. But its Great Prince, Mikháil Borísovitch, and the boyárins who remained faithful to him, determined still to defend themselves. They retired with their troops to the citadel, which was washed on the one side by the Volga, on the other by the Tmáka; the gates were shut, the towers bristled with arquebuses, the battlements were lined with warriors, armed

with melted pitch, with stones, with arrows. Both the fortress and its defenders were prepared to give the besiegers a bloody reception. A poor defence, when hope had departed from the defenders, and treason was whispering in their hearts the fatal word of ruin!

Iván Vassílievitch halted in the village of Kóltzova, from whence he could see Tver, as it were in a picture. Khabár presented himself before him to ask for orders. He knew that Mikháil Borísovitch, trembling for his own security, and still more for his young wife, grand-daughter of the Polish king, Kazimír, was preparing on the following night to escape from the citadel. Khabár promised to seize him, and offered his own head as a gage of his success.

"What should I do with them?" asked Iván Vassílievitch: "the maintenance of my prisoners is very chargeable. Let them fly to Lithuania; traitors to Russia will still be traitors. A slice cut off thou canst not join again to the loaf by force. Let Mikháil Borísovitch go where he will, that Kazimír may know that his friend and cousin of Tver is not formidable to me. Tver, even without a hostage, is mine—I have her safe."

And on this occasion his calculations were cor-

rect. In a private conference he spoke further to Khabár; but that conference remained a secret.

Khabár had friends in every cantonment. Many and strange were the tales he told them about Tver "With one ear I dipped in, with the other I dipped out," he said, "and I succeeded in making an obeisance in the Church of the gold-domed Saviour. The gallants of Tver had bought and sold my head; but I said to them—'Don't hurry yourselves my lad s, don't fatigue yourselves in vain; I am sorry for ye; even as it is ye begin to grow lean; this hot-brained pate of mine is sold to the golden cupola of Moscow: She cannot let ye have it cheap: ye cannot afford to give the price.'"

"Now then, tell us, didst thou make love to many of the pretty girls of Tver? Didst thou roll out many a barrel from the boyárin's cellars?" enquired the wild gallants of Moscow.

"I made love only to one pretty girl, to a thought of reforming," answered Khabár. "She whispered a word of love in my ear, and ordered me to tell ye—'We are all kin, brothers, to our holy Russia; we shall soon be united to Iván Vassílievitch. I will come to ye, my brethren, and I will fall down at your feet; take me, my friends, into your family.

I will show ye my white bosom; sow it with a little seed, with a kind word, and it shall spring up into a stately tree. If ye take off the head, weep not for the hair; be merciful, and I will be for ever your slave and sister.'"

"Let the bell-ringer ring to mass! But we are not going to play the priest, my boys!" exclaimed Khabár-Simskoi's former comrades. "Will they like us

'With fire and smoke to cense them straight,
Or with Kisten* to cross their pate?'

Thou art a leader of the war, and not a hermit, good Khabár. Thou hast found this fit of piety, like a cast-off gown, in some cell or other, and thou wilt wear it o' festival days; it doth not fit thee—it was not made for thee, boy: hark!—'tis gone!—and even its track hath vanished! Thy natural and gallant disposition is like the careering of the wild breeze over the plain—or the hawk that flaps her wings amain: that belongs to thee, as the shore to the sea.

* *Kisten*, a weapon much used by the ancient Russians. It consisted of a ball of iron, (sometimes spiked,) attached to a short rope or thong.—T. B. S.

'Or maiden or widow so fine, is the damsel I joy to call mine;
A kiss on *her* lip so divine—oh, it sparkles and glows like the wine;
But the other's lip hideth a thorn, that sorrowful mistress of thine!'

Give a glance at the bright sparkling bowl, and sorrow hath fled from thy soul. Thou, Khabár, art Iván Vassílievitch's voevóda when bestriding the fiery steed; but thou art ours when thou art stretched out under the bench, at the board of the bright sunny mead."

Thus the gallants exchanged jests after the Russian fashion. Barrels of mead, the plunder of some boyárin's cellar in the neighbourhood, were temptingly abundant through the camp, and looked very affectionately at Khabár; the talk of his companions lighted up in his heart his former thirst for pleasure. But he remembered his promise to his father, his duty, and thanked his friends in a single goblet. From them he proceeded to Aristotle's tent. He had occasion to consult with him about the illumination which was to take place at night. His lively description of the gay and joyous life of the *volunteers*, inflamed the imagination of the leech and Andrióusha; both entreated the young voevóda to take them with him on a night expedition. Khabár had not forgotten the leech's services at the court of

Palæologos, and loved him in spite of himself, notwithstanding his being a heretic. In the goodness of his heart, Obrazétz's son was ready to serve him to the utmost of his power. He consented to take them into his band; on the condition, however, that Antony should wear the dress of the Russians, and have his hair cut after their fashion. This request flattered Antony's heart: *she* would hear of this transformation, *she* would see him in the Russian dress, thought the young man, a child in heart—and he himself offered the scissors to Khabár. Down fell the ringlets of his bright and flowing locks at the feet of the voevóda; in a few seconds the German leech was metamorphosed into a handsome Russian gallant. An equipment was soon found; helmet, cuirass, and broadsword. The military trappings became him as well as if he had worn them from his infancy; it was evident that he was born for the profession of arms, and that destiny had erred in devoting him to another calling.

"Thou takest with thee both my sons," said the engineer to Khabár, when he communicated the Great Prince's permission to the children to volunteer; "look that thou keepest them like thine own brethren."

When he bade them farewell, he presented each of them with a number of iron balls filled with gunpowder—as many as they could take, explaining the method of preserving and employing them. He had only just invented them, and called them playthings. These balls were destined to play a terrible part in the imagination of our ancestors, who beheld the devil in all kinds of instruments which exceeded their comprehension; by comparing them with the grenades of our own times, we may form some idea of the tremendous effects attributed to them.

Whoever has visited the Zéltikoff monastery, by the road which runs along the Tmáka, must have doubtless stopped more than once to admire the picturesque windings of the river. The traveller is not struck here by wild, grand views, recalling the poetic confusion of the elements in some dreadful convulsion of the world: he will find here no huge rocks—those steps by which the Titans marched to the conflict with heaven, and from which they fell, casting away in the unequal fight fragments of their arms, which even yet terrify the imagination: he will not behold here traces of the deluge, hardened as when it rushed from the bowels of the earth; the secular oak, that Ossian of the forest, chanting, in

the hour of the tempest, the victory of heaven over earth; he will not hear the bellowing of the cataract, thundering from afar, that eternal echo of those blaspheming shouts which clove the ear of nature, in the wrestling of creation with its Maker. No, he will not be struck here with this wild and sublime picture. A modest rivulet, as if not daring to sport; the calm ripple of its waters, the subdued clatter of a mill; banks which, after leaving the road for a while, soon return to it, and then wind away from it again; a meadow stretching away into thickets; a dark pine forest, now sighing like a hermit after heaven, now murmuring as it were a prayer to itself, now chanting a low sweet melody, like a psalmist in profound thought, who runs over the golden strings of his dulcimer; in front two monasteries, around deep loneliness—all along his path reminds him that he is going towards a religious habitation.

It was exactly here, close to the road which leads along the rivulet of Tmáka, that there stood, at the time of which we write, a small mill, (on the very same spot where there is one at this day.) The wheels were silent. The Tveritchánins and common people of the neighbourhood, occupied with the agitations of war, were not busy in their daily labour—

it was no time to grind flour when the fate of the whole land was hanging in the scales of destiny. It was eventide, and, therefore, the sole inhabitants of the miller's cottage, its master, a white-headed old man, and a boy of twelve years old, his adopted son, a dumb child, had lain down to rest. The stillness of their solitude was only broken by the prattle of the rivulet, which, as if complaining of its confinement, wept here and there through the mill-race. Suddenly the boy started up to listen, waved his hand, and uttered an inarticulate cry. The dumb boy's hearing was extraordinarily acute; his plaintive cry always gave faithful intelligence of the approach of a visitor or passer-by. And now this prediction, inducing the old man to look out of the window, was speedily confirmed. The noise of horsemen was heard. The miller lighted a splinter of pine, and its glare, falling from the window on the left bank of the rivulet, fitfully illuminated a crowd of cavaliers. One of them dismounted from his horse, and requested the miller in a subdued voice, as not daring to make himself heard too loudly, to show him the road across the mill-dam. The request was obeyed without hesitation, and the horsemen, of whom the miller counted about a hundred, passed over the mill-dam,

and spread themselves on the right bank of the Tmáka. Marshes, and the ditches which had been dug between them, protected the troop from any enemy's attack. The horsemen remaining on the left bank, (perhaps there were twenty,) crowded into the courtyard of the mill, and into the cottage itself. This was the band of Tver, which the Prince Mikháil Khólmskii, (a kinsman of the Muscovite voevóda, the Prince Daníel Dmítrievitch,) one of the most faithful servants of his lord, had assembled almost by force, and detached hither. The soldiers who composed it marched as it were in a funeral procession; and no wonder—they were arrayed not to defend their sovereign in his capital, over the graves of his crowned forefathers, beneath the shadow of the golden-domed Saviour, but to escort a man who had ceased to be their sovereign, and who had, of his own free-will, without a struggle, left them at the mercy of another, already victorious by the terror of his name alone. Without bidding farewell for ever to his subjects, by night, like a thief, depriving them of their Great Prince, and of all the sanctity comprehended in that name, he was about to fly, a cowardly exile, to Lithuania, a country immemorially the enemy of their own. Did not

this shameful flight realease them from their allegiance? This thought alone was enough to destroy their courage. With it were mingled the inducements and the bribes of Iván's partisans; the rumours of the favour with which the rich and powerful Great Prince of Moscow, who must sooner or later be their master, overwhelmed those who would set the example of going over to his side; and the rumours, too, of the punishment which would fall on those whose obstinacy would delay their desertion too long. An hour had not passed before the greater part of them, one after another, under various pretexts, skulked away behind the bushes, directed their horses' heads along the left bank of the rivulet, and crossing it at a convenient place, betook themselves to the Muscovite camp. This they had only thus long delayed to do, from the impossibility of deserting from the town without danger. Only about a dozen brave men, remaining among the bushes, refused to betray their duty. And for this there was an important reason—sleep had overcome them. They had yielded themselves up to it, trumpeting the praises of Prince Mikháil Borísovitch and Iván Vassílievitch without distinction, as they appeared in their dreams. The chief of this band suspected nothing of what was going on. He was quietly

seated in the cottage, addressing his conversation alternately to the miller, to the centurion and captain of ten, who were with him, or who were listening. At midnight he expected the agreed-on signal from the road to Stáritza.

"Who is that? thy son?" he asked the miller, pointing to the boy.

"My adopted son, fair sir. 'Twill be three years, come the Fast of Assumption, since I found him in the woods of the monastery. He hath never uttered a word—it is clear the Wood Spirit hath *passed over* him. From that day he hath been as dumb as a fish. We have not discovered either his family or kin; so I, ye see, became a father to him."

Then began tales, among the warriors of Tver, about various dumb people, who had become so from the Wood Spirit's having *passed over* them.

"But how doth the Wood-demon agree with thy House-spirit?" asked the chief again.

"It would be sinful to say that I have reason to complain of him, though he hath no reason either to use us ill: we take care of his dwelling in the woods, and we never insult him."

"Perhaps, then, he hath visited thee, grandfather!"

"And he hath done that too, fair sir."

"Did he come himself, or didst thou invite him? Didst thou regale him with cake or crabstick?" laughingly asked one of the captains, a free-thinker, an *esprit-fort*, of those times, who was sitting close to the window.

"Jest not about him, boyárin; if thou shout in wood or plain, crack! he will reply again," answered the miller.

At this moment somebody scratched loudly at the window, and the captain fancied he had heard a thousand footsteps in the forest.

At these sounds the brave warrior felt "goose-skin" creeping all over him.

"Look," cried the chief, bursting into a loud laugh, "the centurion hath changed countenance; he is frightened at a cat!"

"Thou wouldst not be our chief if thou wert not braver than we," answered the captain angrily, retiring from the window.

"Now, then, old fellow," said the chief, turning to the miller, "untruss; tell us how the Wood-spirit came to see thee."

"Assuredly; if it will give pleasure to you, my lord. It was the summer before last, about the feast of St Nikolai of the Winter, in the night-time,

as it might be now—may I speak it in a good hour, and hold my tongue in an evil one! The frost was fierce, it raged like a famished beast; ye could not put your nose out of doors, so sharply would it nip it in its claws; my cottage groaned and creaked, as if some one was laying on to its ribs with an oaken cudgel. About an hour's space passed, and then it lulled a little. All about rose up the whirlwinds, groaning, swirling, twirling like a spindle, or as when a troop of horse are galloping and chasing one another, or when a good spinner turns the spindle —you could not tell whether the snow was falling from heaven, or whirling up from the earth—you could not see a speck of God's creation. My son was asleep, but I could not sleep—I expected every moment that the roof would be torn off, and that we should be carried away, body and goods. I lighted myself a pine splinter, but my heart kept on beating. All of a sudden, I hear something behind me breathing chill on me. I felt a kind of cold air; I look, and I see before me a tall white-headed old man, with his hair all dishevelled, like a pine, a beard down to his knees, as large as a good armful of combed flax, as white as one of us when we have been grinding flour two days and nights running; his eyes were

grey, and seemed to look one through; he wore a fur gown with the hair outwards.

"'Twould be a sin to deny that my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth; my feet felt as if they were nailed to the ground. 'Fear nothing,' he said, 'I have come to warm myself; ever since I have made the forest grow, I never saw such weather.' And he began to warm himself at the stove, spreading out his bony fingers. When he had thawed himself a-while, he prepared to go back to his place. 'I thank thee,' he said—'never will I forget thy kindness.' From that time, my good lord, I have never seen him again. But the Wood-spirit hath kept his word. The husbandmen that bring their corn to me to be ground, never have done praising a good man who meeteth them in the forest in bad weather, and guideth them to me: if a man's nag is knocked up, he just lays his hand on their sledge, and it goes on of itself as they had harnessed a five-year-old to it. And the little roads that lead to my house, are always as level and smooth as the first snow-roads, and" . . . .

A distant groan was heard, and then it was repeated.

"Is it not our sentinels on the high-road that are calling us?" asked the chief.

"They would have sent a picket," said the captain.

"Look out of the window."

The captain was ashamed to refuse. With a presentiment of some evil he drew back the sliding window, and instantly started away from it with a shout of terror. Not he alone, but many of the soldiers—the chief himself—saw sparks spreading before the window, and glaring upon them a hoary old man, with a long white beard.

Nobody dared to stir. The window remained open. Two or three moments passed, and again appeared the old man's face. This time he cried, in a hoarse voice—"Get ye gone from hence, over the mill-dam. Enter not my forest, or your very bones shall never be gathered."

And he vanished.

Trembling seized the warriors: they seemed to dread to look at one another; much less could they stir from their places, so completely had the Wood-spirit frightened them. They sat upon the benches, neither alive nor dead.

Immediately afterward there appeared a ball of

fire, rolling over and over, and crackling like the laughter of an hundred witches at their Sabbath. It seemed as if the trees of the forest were crushed. Then a crash was heard that made the walls quake; a splinter flew from the window and wounded one of the soldiers in the face. All immediately threw themselves out of the cottage on all fours; upsetting each other, shoving and crowding, they rushed into the court where their horses were; tumbling over their comrades who were sleeping in the yard, and who, frightened out of their wits by this rough awakening from their sleep, rushed hither and thither, seizing the first horse that came to hand, mounting anyhow, by head or tail. The frightened steeds darted out of the court-yard to the mill-dam, into the forest, or tumbled with a loud splash into the water; their masters, crowding over the dam, and shoving against each other, fell in also. The uproar was tremendous. The band posted on the right bank of the rivulet in the underwood was also struck with panic. Not knowing what was the matter, they galloped along the mill-dam, capsizing those they met, and cutting at each other or the air. And again the Wood-demon glared with his fiery eyes, now in one place, now in another; again the

ball of fire rolled along, wounding and killing the fliers. The infernal laugh resounded behind them, and was repeated along the water and through the forest by a hundred echoes. In a few minutes, out of the whole band which was to have escorted the Great Prince of Tver, there remained in the mill and its vicinity, to a distance of some hundred fathoms round, only about a dozen wounded or killed, drowned in the river or buried in the swamp. The rest had all galloped off full speed straight to the Great Prince of Moscow. In the course of their flight they saw in different quarters of Tver fiery tongues begin to gleam, and flit along the roofs: they heard the thunder of the cannon resounding louder and louder through the suburbs, and the beating of the kettle-drums. Soon, mingling with this dirge of Tver, arose the cries of the besiegers and the groans of the inhabitants.

Silence again sank down around the cottage. But the miller, almost frightened out of his senses by all that he had seen and heard, stood, neither dead nor alive, still on the same spot, in the middle of his hut, muttering a prayer. In this attitude he was found by fresh guests. These were two armed gallants; they bore in triumph on their arms a little Wood-

spirit, and seated him on a bench. Then such a fit of laughter began among them, that they were forced to hold their sides.

"Well, much thanks, father; thou hast helped us," said the little Wood-demon.

The old man comprehended nothing of this apparition, and knew not what to answer.

"Well done the brave army of Tver!" exclaimed one of the new-comers; "it ran away from a horse's tail."

Then Andrióusha (for it was really he, disguised with some white tails, which they had cut off from two horses for the nonce, and hastily twisted round his chin and head)—then Andrióusha took off the attributes of the Wood-demon, and appeared before the miller in his real form. These unexpected guests were soon joined by several dozens of Khabár-Simskoi's brave band, and then began the tales of the manner in which this strange victory had been won. Having laughed their fill, and having recompensed the miller with the horses that were left in the court, for damage done to his cottage and for the future burial of the killed, the volunteers hastened to another piece of business. Andrióusha, and the two soldiers to whose care he was confided,

were dispatched to Khabár to report the success of their attempt; those who remained joined the troops, which were posted about the forest in such a manner, that at the first signal they could concentrate themselves on any point that signal might indicate.

In the mean time Khabár Símskoi, with the leech Antony, and some dozen soldiers, was employed on another service. They had taken prisoners two small pickets, which were posted at the exit from the suburb beyond the Tmáka, rather nearer to the pine forest, and had given them over to an ambush composed of some of the volunteers, by whom they were conducted in turn to the Zéltikoff monastery. When the voevóda was convinced, by these attempts to make a sortie, and by the information of Andrióusha, that the Muscovite troop had no danger to apprehend in the direction of the suburbs beyond the Tmáka, he posted a picket of a small number of his cavaliers at the very same spot, close to the exit from the suburb, on which the defeated Tver-itchánins had been stationed. From thence he detached a party of his cavalry along the Tmáka on one side, and along the Volga on the other. It was impossible for the fish to slip by. They awaited a good haul.

"They are coming," said Andrióusha, whose daring, which it was impossible to restrain, had carried him closer to the suburb: "I was the first to hear them; tell my father this, and Iván Vassílievitch."

And in reality the gallop of cavalry was soon distinguished, and speedily a number of horsemen appeared through the darkness, and came up in a line with Khabár.

"Who goes there?" he cried.

"Friends," boldly replied one of the horsemen.

"And ye?" enquired a tremulous voice.

"Thine escort, my lord," answered Khabár, guessing that this was the voice of the Great Prince of Tver, a feeble old man; then he whistled shrilly.

At this signal, the cordon which had been formed, closed round him in a few moments. The darkness did not permit faces to be distinguished.

"Come closer to me, my lord," said Khabár; "by my side thy path will be clear."

The Great Prince Mikháil Borísovitch advanced from among his attendants, and rode close up to Khabár, followed by another person on horseback. "For the love of God, take care of my

Princess," he said. "O, Lord! forgive me my sins!"

"Be thou not disquieted about me," exclaimed a gay female voice. Antony closed up to the side of the Princess. In this manner the precious pledge was under the swords of two powerful gallants, either of whom, in case of need, was a match for two opponents. The Great Prince's attendants were surrounded by Khabár's band. Khólmskii, suspecting nothing, rode a few paces behind. He was less anxious about his position than disquieted by the thought of flying from the city; and stopped from time to time to listen whether they were pursued.

The body was put in motion; it proceeded in silence. The stillness was only broken by Mikháil Borísovitch, who ever and anon entreated them to go gently, and give him time to breathe and make a piteous prayer.

They had just begun to approach the wood, when cannon thundered in the direction of Moscow, the sound of kettle-drums was heard in the city, and the suburbs began to grow visible.

Mikháil Borísovitch's horse stumbled, but Khabár succeeded in catching the rein, held it up, and thus saved the Prince from a fall.

Objects began to start out from the gloom.

The Great Prince glanced at his fellow-traveller, glanced at the fellow-traveller of the Princess, and again at his own. The features were unknown to him, both with swords drawn; his attendants were surrounded by strangers! He was confounded: a deathlike paleness overspread his cheeks; the unfortunate old man felt about to faint, and reined in his horse. The young Princess, suspecting nothing, gazed with a kind of childish coquettishness at her handsome squire. She was in man's attire—a prettier boy was never seen; but the fair Lithuanian knew how to betray, and skilfully too, that she was a woman.

To Khólmskii all this terrible by-play was now explained—his master was a prisoner.

"We are betrayed!" he cried; "friends, let us rescue our Great Prince, or die with him!"

At this exclamation the attendants drew their swords, and were about to cut their way out of the net in which they were involved.

Khabár whistled, and the forest seemed alive with hundreds of soldiers. "Be not rash, Prince, if thou lovest the welfare and the life of thy sovereign," he shouted, seizing the rein of Mikháil Borísovitch's

horse. "Spill not blood in vain: preserve his head —one blow and it shall fall!"

Again he whistled, and another troop advanced from the pine-wood.

"Thou see'st, thy men are prisoners; mine start up in thousands, if need be. The troop of Tveritchánins, which thou sentest to the mill, is all driven away, and hath already yielded to our Great Prince. Neither now nor hereafter hath Mikháil Borísovitch any thing to look for from Tver. Know, that the Muscovites can gain glory and honour for their sovereign; and, if need be, that they can escort even a stranger prince in all honour."

What could be done by a handful against an overwhelming force? The last defenders of the Great Prince lowered their weapons. Prince Khólmskii now began to propose conditions.

Khabár turned to the Great Prince of Tver.—"Time is precious for thee and for Tver, once thine, Mikháil Borísovitch," said the voevóda. "Thou see'st how the city is blazing. This is a flash from the wrathful eyes of Iván Vassílievitch; it will consume the houses of God, the dwellings of rich and poor. Thou alone can quench that flame. The Tveritchánins were once thy children: how canst

thou be their father, if, in leaving them, thou desirest their curses, and not their blessings for thy memory? Hearest thou their cry? . . . . They pray to thee at parting—'tis for mercy: save their dwellings, wives, children—save them from unmerited blood and fire. Instead of these flames that run along the roofs, leave words of mercy, like tapers before the image of our Lord."

At the commencement of these arguments terror and indecision were imaged in the face of Mikháil Borísovitch; at length his heart was touched, and he said—"What am I to do? instruct me."

"This. Send instantly, with my courier, the Prince Khólmskii to Tver, and command him without delay, in thy name, to open the gates of the city to the Great Prince of Moscow, Iván Vassílievitch, and to make submission on the part of Tver, to him as to its lawful sovereign."

"With whom, then, am I and the Princess to remain?" enquired the timid old man.

"From us thou hast nothing to fear. We have not come to lead the Prince of Tver into captivity, but to conduct with honour Mikháil Borísovitch, cousin of the Great Prince of Moscow. Our lord hath already enough princes in his prisons: Iván

Vassílievitch commanded me to tell thee this. My young men, cloth-workers and silk-merchants of Moscow, will conduct thee to the first station, and to the second if thou wish. Select thyself the escort, as many as thou wilt. For a single hair of thine they shall answer with their heads. This I swear to thee by the Most Holy Mother of God and the merciful Saviour."

Here he crossed himself.

"If thou dost not trust me, I am Khabár-Simskoi. I will yield me unarmed as a hostage to the Prince Khólmskii."

"For Khabár I will answer," said Khólmskii.

Who is there that, in the place of the Great Prince of Tver—childless, hopeless, surrounded by treachery, in his old age—would not have consented to the proposition of the Muscovite voevóda?

Doffing his bonnet and skull-cap, and thrice signing himself with the cross, the old man, in view of the conflagration of his capital, yielded up the cathedral of the Holy Saviour and the principality of Tver to the ruler of All Russia. Sadly touching were his words, like the last injunctions of a dying man. Tears streamed down his pale, feeble face, and more than once he was interrupted by his sobs.

When you ride past the pine-forest of Zéltikoff, remember that this abdication was performed under its darksome shade.

"If I had possessed many servants like thee," said Mikháil Borísovitch, as he embraced Khabár at parting, "Tver would yet have been mine."

The Lithuanian girl turned her head aside, not to show the tears which fell from her eyes as she extended her hand to Khabár in sign of good-will. The young man, however, refused to kiss her hand, and said haughtily—"Pardon me, I may not kiss the hand of a foreign sovereign."

The Princess blushed deeply, and the arches of her black brows were bent in displeasure.

"But *I* may kiss that pretty hand!" exclaimed Andrióusha, dismounting from his horse and taking off his helmet.

The white hand was given to him with delight, and the lady embraced the handsome boy-warrior.

"Who is to escort us?" said the Princess, bending on Antony her eyes, sparkling with lively satisfaction.

Khabár hastened to select a sufficient number of volunteers, who were ordered to guard the late ruler of Tver to the first station; he himself hurried off

with Khólmskii to the city, in order to stop the spreading of the flames and useless bloodshed. Antony accompanied him; it was time for him to be performing his duties as a leech, (this he had almost forgotten.) He was extremely glad to be rescued from the seducing eyes of Kazimír's grand-daughter, whose brightness, if not dangerous, was at least likely to disturb his tranquillity. In his place, the indefatigable Andrióusha begged to be chosen one of the escort. The consequence was, that at the first halt in the woods, the knees of the beautiful Lithuanian served him as a pillow: wearied out, he slumbered on them, as in the lap of his mother, a deep, an angel's slumber; and the warm, melting kiss of his fair nurse, disturbed not his pure visions.

The next day the Princess and the Prince begged Andrióusha to accompany them some dozen versts further. He consented. The Prince travelled in a waggon which had been dispatched to meet him from the first station; the Princess rode with Andrióusha on horseback. Lovely children—surely brother and sister!—you would have said, observing them romping together, racing with each other, and stopping in the woods to hear the singing of the birds. The grand-daughter of Kazimír forgot the

crown she had lost, and seemed to revel in her freedom, like a bird just let out of a golden cage. At Tver she had been confined by the seclusion of a palace; every thing there was so strange to her! In Lithuania she would meet her mother, her friends, her kinsmen—a life of liberty. This thought delighted her, for she was young and lively; still a guest at the feast of life.

When Andrióusha bade farewell to the exiles, they invited him to accompany them to Lithuania. "No," he said, "I cannot; I am a Russian!"

The remainder of the tale how Tver was subdued, I will finish in the words of the historian. "Then the bishop, the prince Mikháila Khólmskii, and other princes, boyárins, and citizens of the land, having preserved to the end their fidelity to their lawful sovereign, opened the gates of the city to Iván, came forth and saluted him as the supreme monarch of Russia. The Great Prince sent his boyárins and deacons to receive the allegiance of the inhabitants, commanded that the dead should be buried . . . . and entered Tver, heard mass in the Cathedral of the Transfiguration, and solemnly proclaimed that he gave the principality to his son, Iván Ivánovitch, left him there, and returned to Moscow. In a short

time he sent his boyárins to Tver, to Stáritza, Zoubtzóff, Opóki, Klin, Kholm, Nóvgorodok, to inscribe all the lands, and divide them into ploughgates for the payment of the taxes of the crown. So rapidly vanished the famous state of Tver, which, from the time of St Mikháil Yároslavitch, had borne the title of the *great* principality, and had long struggled with Moscow itself for supremacy."

END OF VOL. II.

EDINBURGH: PRINTED BY BALLANTYNE AND HUGHES,
PAUL'S WORK CANONGATE.

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Lažečnikov, Ivan Ivanovič,

The Heretic or The German Stranger an historical romance of the court of Russia in the fifteenth century ; in three volumes

Bd.: 2

Edinburgh and London (1845)

P.o.rel. 3220-2
urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10036314-6